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# THE PHENOMENON OF THE SOVIET













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# THE PHENOMENON OF THE SOVIET CINEMA



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**ФЕНОМЕН СОВЕТСКОГО КИНЕМАТОГРАФА**

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# INTRODUCTION

The history of the Soviet cinema is rich in vivid and talented films, heated disagreements and discussions, struggles against mistakes, and the overcoming of false norms with bold searches for new ones.

We cannot claim that the present study will encompass all of this. Our task is a more narrow one: to acquaint the reader with some of the fundamental creative problems that arose during the Soviet cinema's development, problems that have not lost their importance today and still face contemporary cinema-makers, albeit in a slightly different form. We cannot remain indifferent to these problems because we have a stake in the success of this most broad-scale of all the arts and are directly, actively involved in its destiny.

The first leaders of the Soviet cinema were people who came from related art-forms—the theatre, painting, and literature. There was nothing accidental about this. The Revolution brought new elements into not only life, social relations and work. These years were also decisive for art. It was a time of bold searchings, and age-old canons were energetically swept away everywhere. Not all that was new, as it turned out later, was accepted by life, but the spirit of experiment, the poetry of discovering something for the first time, the laying of new, hitherto unknown paths led to the creation of a fundamentally innovative, revolutionary art.

Soviet cinema of the nineteen-twenties produced masterpieces whose artistic value has not decreased with time and made discoveries that determined the development of the cinema for a long time to come. A whole group of talented men and women worked in cinema at that time, each with his own personality and ideas.

The cinema as a dynamic art-form was seen by many people

at this time as the most modern, revolutionary, and most appropriate art—in terms of its advanced technology—for the industrial twentieth century, without even speaking of its latently limitless, almost miraculous potential. This new art was born in a very romantic setting.

Many people were drawn irresistibly into the cinema at this time. Among them were those who were attracted, above all, by the novelty of cinema, its technics and the special bustle and excitement surrounding the filming process.

But still there were more genuine artists who did not come to the Soviet cinema empty-handed, but brought bold ideas with them that could only be realised in the cinema.

This new art combined a powerfully realistic, documental depiction of the external world with bold and decisive interference on the part of the artist.

Everything acquired special meaning on the screen — time, space, movement, and human behaviour. A man could be shown from far away—the size of a tiny dot—yet in the next instant the viewer (that is, millions of viewers) could be brought face to face with him, thus enabling them to observe the subtlest nuances of his feelings.

Of course, from today's point of view cinematic techniques in this period were imperfect and primitive, and methods of film production were still undeveloped. This gave rise to any number of comic incidents and anecdotes that have also become part of cinema history.

The romanticism of this entirely new art-form attracted enthusiastic young people seeking an area in which to apply their seemingly unlimited powers. It was during these years that the chemist Vsevolod Pudovkin, the engineer Sergei Eisenstein, the Chekist Friedrich Ermler, the teacher and painter Aleksandr Dovzhenko, the theatrical artists Grigori Kozintsev and Sergei Yutkevich, and many others whose names are now known throughout the world began to work in the cinema on what was nearly virgin soil.

All these progressively-inclined artists, who now began



to create the new Soviet cinema, enthusiastically supported the young Soviet power.

However, the Soviet cinema did not grow up on entirely virgin soil. Today we have moved beyond that time when what was accomplished by the pre-revolutionary Russian cinema was critically underrated. As the years and decades pass, the distance in time enables us to more clearly appraise the past. And we are able to re-examine earlier judgements and reject extremes in them. This is both natural and inevitable.

## PRE-HISTORY

Lumière's first public cinema showings took place in Paris in late 1895. The novelty quickly spread throughout the world, and in 1896 Maxim Gorky wrote in a letter published in the *Odessa News* about the enormous impression these first cinema showings produced among audiences in Russia. Immediately realising the new invention's enormous possibilities, he expressed the hope that the 'cinematograph' would serve science and progress. The writer became acquainted with the cinema at the famous All-Russian Fair in Nizhny Novgorod (now Gorky). In this early period the cinema was only a fairground attraction in Russia and in other countries. Short films were shown in the fair tents, and this amusement proved more successful than previous spectacles like the 'closets' where for a few farthings one could see girls undressing through a small viewfinder. This was also cinema, though not of Lumière's standard.

Progressive Russian scholars, public figures, and artists took a lively interest in the cinematograph and its future. The very development of art had paved the way for the appearance of the cinema, at least, some genres and stylistic tendencies. When Lev Tolstoy wrote *A Living Corpse* for the theatre, he complained: 'I tore out my hair and bit my finger with irritation that I could not write many scenes and episodes and go quickly from one event to another'. Structural possibilities of this type was the very essence of the cinema, which now came into being.

After the capitals of Moscow and Petersburg, permanent cinema theatres now began to grow up in other Russian towns as well. At first they showed foreign films and documental footage, but within a few years production of Russian films also got under way.

Naturally, in the conditions of pre-revolutionary Russia, as in any other capitalist country, even the most talented and enterprising film-makers had difficulty in fully exploiting the possibilities inherent in cinema—for instance, making documental films of important political and social events.

Nevertheless the pioneers of the Russian documental film must be given their due—they did succeed in accomplishing something. It is particularly significant that in 1905 cinema cameramen tried to record the events of the First Russian Revolution on film. A revolutionary demonstration was filmed in Moscow. However, the tsarist police confiscated the film, and today it is regarded as lost.

Documental films of an educational character were also made: *View of Moscow and the Moscow Kremlin*, *The Horse Railway*, *Views of the City of Yaroslavl*, *The Volunteer Fire Fighters of Bogorodsk*—these were some titles of early subjects. Documental fragments filmed from the lives of outstanding Russian cultural figures have been preserved (*L. N. Tolstoy's Eightieth Birthday*, *V. N. Davydov at Home in the Country*, etc.).

The efforts of the first entrepreneurs in Moscow, Petersburg, Odessa, and other cities led to the appearance of small movie studios which soon began to release their first films. A film which appeared under two titles, *Stenka Razin and the Princess* or *A Free Cossack State in the Lower Reaches of the Volga* (1908), made by A. Drankov in Petersburg, is regarded as the first Russian film. Drankov was a journalist and news correspondent, and made primarily superficial, illustrative documental films showing official events (funerals, religious feasts, the tsar's reception of the heads of foreign states, etc.), but he also filmed more significant subjects. Once he had acquired cinematic experience in documental films, Drankov undertook to create a Russian non-documental film. This effort was successful by the standards of the time, although the film was only 224 metres long and its artistic qualities were very limited, even by the low cinematic standards of the time.

The film met with enormous audience interest, above all because it was a novelty, the first Russian non-documental film. Moreover, Drankov skillfully played on the public's interest in themes associated with Russian history and folklore. The film's basis was the text of a popular song about the leader of the seventeenth-century peasant uprising, the Don Cossack Stenka Razin. Among the makers of this picture we should name Nikolai Kozlovsky, then only beginning his career as a cinema cameraman, later to be a famous cameraman on many Soviet films, an associate of noted Soviet film directors. It is also interesting to note Drankov's far-sightedness: he ordered a musical overture to the film from the composer Ivanov-Kramskoy which made use of motifs from the well-known song; the score was sent along with copies of the film and performed in the theatres, enhancing its popularity with audiences. While giving their due to the enterprising spirit behind the film, serious critics nonetheless had to reproach it with its false 'folklorishness', the actors' discordant costumes, their heavy makeup, exaggerated gestures, etc.

Nevertheless, this picture was a positive phenomenon. It made Drankov and other film production pioneers believe in the prospects for producing feature films in Russia. This was perhaps the most important thing, for energetic people, among whom figured some genuine talents, now began to flock to this new art.

Along with Drankov, another major Russian film entrepreneur in this early period of the Russian cinema was Aleksandr Khanzhonkov. In 1906, as the representative of foreign cinema companies, Khanzhonkov, a retired cavalry officer, organised his own cinema company. A film studio soon appeared in Moscow, and Khanzhonkov actively participated in its constantly expanding activities; he later brought together many cinema figures, already well-known at this early date—Lev Kuleshov, Pyotr Chardynin, Vera Kholodnaya, Ivan Mozhukhin, Evgeny Bauer, Valentin Turkin, Grigori Giber,



Boris Zavelev, and many other actors, directors, cameramen, and scriptwriters. Khanzhonkov and his wife, Vera, worked in Soviet cinema after the Revolution for many years.

As they acquired more experience and absorbed foreign experience, the Russian film companies headed by Khanzhonkov and other entrepreneurs attracted talented people and began to produce Russian feature films in various genres. Historical subjects at first predominated, and literary classics were also adapted for the screen. This was to a large degree explained by the fact that ready-made, vivid characters, dramatic situations and subjects could be drawn from these sources. However, it is very difficult today for us to judge the real artistic intentions of cinema-makers at this period, inasmuch as they were inevitably linked with considerations of a 'non-aesthetic' character. The early twentieth century for Russia was filled with important dramatic events, but these events did not become the subjects of films. It was only in the nineteen-twenties, after historical revolutionary changes had taken place in the country, that some film-makers of the older generation — Lev Kuleshov, Yakov Protazanov, Valentin Turkin, and others — dealt with social themes in their best works.

But let us go back to the beginning. After *Stenka Razin and the Princess* a number of feature films drawing on themes from the works of major writers were made: *Eugene Onegin*, *The Mermaid* (from Pushkin), *The Masquerade* and *Story about the Merchant Kalashnikov* (from Lermontov), *The Power of Darkness* (Tolstoy), *Crime and Punishment* (Dostoevsky), and many others. Images from Russian songs also frequently provided material for films as well as historical novels and pages from Russian history: *Lomonosov*, *The Defence of Sevastopol*, *Napoleon in Russia*, *Ermak Timofeyevich*, *Conqueror of Siberia*, *Peter the Great*, and others.

As this list shows, from the very beginning the Russian cinema actively elaborated Russian themes and strove to affirm its national individuality. The artistic content and

aesthetic realisation of this tendency is another matter altogether, however, as was the presence (or absence) of objective circumstances for the creation of major films. The total lack of social themes and criticism of social system is only too obvious, as is the superficial treatment of original sources, of which only the 'story' survives in the films. Nonetheless, the cinema overcame its traits as a 'fairground amusement' amazingly quickly, although there were still many obstacles in the way of major artistic achievements. The major obstacle was its over-simplified approach to history and to original sources (literature, songs, etc.), and to reality in general. Nonetheless, individual films do stand out as being of special historical interest.

In particular, there was *The Defence of Sevastopol* made by Vassily Goncharov. Formerly a railroad employee, Goncharov made his cinema debut as script-writer on *Stenka Razin*. Having gained experience as a script-writer and director, he made the first full-length (2000 metres) Russian historical film in 1911. This is a truly important work: it depicts events in the Crimean War (1853-1856) and shows the heroism and self-denial of the Russian soldiers and sailors. The very scale of the director's task and of crowd scenes, the filming of genuine historical spots, and the portraits of historical figures — all this showed Goncharov to be an energetic man and a highly capable organiser. It was not easy at this period to stage battle scenes on this scale, but Goncharov succeeded in making them vivid and dynamic. Of course, the film interpreted the historical events in conformity with official historical views at that time.

Vivid films of this type owed their existence to the fact that the young cinematic art had attracted many talented and energetic young people into its ranks.

Progressive Russian cultural figures now began to come to the aide of this budding art-form, overcoming the inertia of official disdain for cinema. The destiny of the cinema interested and concerned writer Leonid Andreev and theatrical

figures Konstantin Stanislavsky and Fyodor Chaliapine, as well as many others; and this was not just an abstract concern, but a very concrete one. This support gradually began to have its effect. New currents began to be felt in Russian cinema. Themes and genres became more varied and, what is more important, first efforts were made to draw the new art-form into the general tendency of Russian realism. True, the results were not always successful and, of course, they were far from what realism had accomplished in Russian literature, painting, music, and theatre. Nonetheless, those cinema historians who are inclined to underestimate the significance of the Russian cinema inheritance are gravely mistaken. In recent years Soviet cinema criticism has taken great strides forward in serious research into pre-revolutionary Russian cinema. Studies of cinema history have now made fundamental progress towards a realistic appraisal of what our cinematic predecessors bequeathed to us.

### A Few Brief Profiles

The noted Soviet film director Pyotr Chardynin (1878-1934) began his career in the early years of Russian cinema. His work as a director is characterised by high professionalism and vast experience. Chardynin made films in many different genres, as well as acting on the screen. The following is a partial list of his films: *Vadim*, *The Boyar Orsha* (Lermontov), *The Wedding* and *Dead Souls* (Gogol), *The Idiot* (Dostoevsky), *Little House in Kolomna* and *The Queen of Spades* (Pushkin), *The Kreutzer Sonata*, *Katyusha Maslova*, *Natasha Rostova*, *The False Coupon* (L. Tolstoy), and *The Deluge* (Sienkiewicz). But it was Chardynin's films on contemporary themes that were most popular — salon melodramas, comedies, and farces. We shall not mention Chardynin's films made after the Revolution for the time being, but the director's early work is important. A gifted director, he was skillful in working with actors, among whom figure such national favourites as Vera

Kholodnaya, Ivan Mozhukhin, Oleg Runich, Vera Koralli, Natalya Lysenko, Vitold Polonsky, Vladimir Maksimov, and Ivan Khudoleev. These and other cinema actors achieved popularity because of their appearances in Chardynin's films — *Life for Life*, *Forget the Fireplace, for the Fire Has Gone Out*, *Be Silent*, *My Sorrow*, *Be Silent*, and others. Another director should also be mentioned here — Evgeny Bauer (1865-1917) who, along with Chardynin played an important role in attracting such famous cinema actors as Vera Kholodnaya, Ivan Mozhukhin, Vitold Polonsky, and Aleksandra Khokhlova into acting on the screen. He did not make any films in the Soviet period: Bauer died in an automobile accident just before the October Revolution, but his part in the formation of the Russian cinema was a vital one. Bauer's films opened new and interesting prospects in terms of camera-work: there were special lighting effects and in-depth frame composition. It was in Bauer's films that Lev Kuleshov — later an important figure in Soviet cinema — began his cinematic career as a scenic designer. Kuleshov no doubt acquired much of his professionalism in working with this skilled, multi-faceted director.

The life and work of the most senior Russian cinema director, Yakov Protazanov (1881-1945), is in some basic respects very much like that of Pyotr Chardynin, with the difference that Protazanov lived longer and was able to develop his artistic gifts more fully. In the pre-revolutionary period alone he directed nearly eighty films. His talent is distinguished for its realistic bent. Protazanov made films that were varied in genre and theme, but he always showed an inclination for realistic depiction — whether of the past or present, whether in drama or comedy. He was also highly capable of working with actors which he enjoyed, and always tried to obtain the best actors from Moscow's theatres for his films. Because of the quality of his actors and his own highly-refined taste, he succeeded in avoiding 'staginess' in his films, a fault which entrains rhetorical, exaggerated effects.

It was also in the pre-revolutionary period that the major talent of Vladimir Gardin (1877-1965), an actor and director, took shape. Unlike Chardynin and Protazanov he came to the cinema studios as an already accomplished theatrical actor. His fine acting skills and knowledgeability in many fields enabled Gardin to quickly carve a place for himself in the cinema, for which he acted, directed, and wrote scripts, mostly adaptations of Russian literary classics, such as Lev Tolstoy, Turgenev, Ostrovsky, etc. Gardin and Protazanov also co-directed several films together. In comparison with his early films, these later films were significantly more sophisticated in their interpretation of figures and episodes from classical literature. Gardin's films make a perceptible attempt to reveal the main character's psychology. Unfortunately, film archives do not contain Gardin's pre-revolutionary films — *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, *Man's Needs are Few* (Lev Tolstoy), *On the Eve*, *A Nest of the Gentry* (Turgenev), *Privalov's Millions* (Mamin-Sibiryak), *Ghosts* (Ibsen), and *Our Heart* (de Maupassant). However, contemporary reviews of these films allow us to form some idea (an approximate one, of course) of their strong and weak points. In the main, the reviewers spoke favourably of his work, emphasising its faithfulness to the originals, its ability to convey the spirit of the source and reveal the emotional atmosphere of the action and, what is especially important, its humane tendency. The film taken from Turgenev's novel *A Nest of the Gentry* was particularly highly rated. Critics noted the screen version's attempt to overcome the fragmental nature that was so typical of screen adaptations at this time, and to clearly depict the major figures.

The directors we have mentioned here, and the well-known actors who took part in their films are by no means an exhaustive list of those who created this new art-form. Script-writers, cameramen, and artists from related art-forms, as well as other spheres of activity also made their contribution. And alongside these highly talented people there were also many

hacks, people whose cultural level was very low. The Russian cinema suffered many serious upheavals in the early twentieth century. The political situation in tsarist Russia, the lack of unity between the various Russian studios, and stiff competition from foreign films—all these factors affected the new art-form and naturally lowered the results of even the most talented efforts. Lowered, but did not totally de-value. However, even in these primitive conditions, significant films were made.

The beginning of the First World War decreased competition—foreign films still predominated on the Russian screen, true, but further imports were significantly cut back; in response to ever-increasing demand, Russian film production companies increased their output. The range of genres expanded, and films became longer. However, the themes and tendencies of these films did not in the slightest reflect the real public mood in Russia. On the eve of the war films were being made on contemporary themes based on limited, liberal attitudes posing as criticism of the social system. This refers, in particular, to films like Bauer's *Mute Witnesses*, Chardynin's *Woman of Tomorrow*, and Goncharov's *The Peasant's Fate*. But this criticism did not touch the essence of social relations, nor did it discuss the root evils of the bourgeois system.

The beginning of the war and, in particular, the period of military setbacks saw more films where a pessimistic tinge appear (*The Poor Fellow Died in a Military Hospital*, *Marauders in the Rear*, *Sleep*, *Valiant Warriors*, *Arina Soldier's Mother*). At the same time films of a different character also began to appear. These were mostly detective, adventure, and spy films, cliché salon dramas, films about the lives of gypsies, prostitutes, coachmen, and fair-ground carousing, all appealing to the lowest tastes. Adaptations of Russian literary classics decreased. Those titles alone give one a good impression of the contents of films during the First World War: *The Countess Who Was a Spy*, the serial adventure film *Sonya with the Golden Hand*, *In the Hands of the Evil Professor*,



*The Prasolov Trial, A Prostitute's Daughter, The Dying Swan, The Dance of Death, The Slums of Petersburg, etc.*

Ironically enough, during this period of pseudo-patriotic militarism, which the tsarist government tried to encourage by any means, two distinct tendencies gained strength in the cinema. On the one hand, the decadent tendency, to which many talented artists belonged, unaware that its real underlying cause was a striving by the most reactionary pace-setters of fashion in art to disorientate the mass audience on the eve of social conflicts which were now coming to a head. Evgeny Bauer probably did not realise that in adapting works like *Life for Life*, *Singed Wings* and *The Idols* for the screen he was making cinema serve the most reactionary social forces. Lack of intellectual content, a superficial understanding of life, and a total lack of realism exerted a fatal influence on many cinema-makers.

But this was only one of the tendencies that developed in cinema during the war years. On the other hand, it was at this time that cinema gradually transformed itself from an 'attraction' into 'the seventh art'. Actors from the Maly and Art theatres who gladly acted in the cinema quickly raised its artistic standing. Directors—in the first instance, Protazanov—feverishly studied all the older classical arts and developed new genres and, most important, a specific cinematic language. Literary and artistic figures such as Gorky, Stanislavsky, Chaliapine, the young Mayakovsky and others were beginning to think seriously about how to use the cinema's artistic possibilities to culturally educate the people. This could not fail to influence the internal processes taking place in the cinema. Progressive film-makers increasingly began to strive towards artistic realism.

These two closely interrelated, yet sharply conflicting tendencies determined the development of cinema at this initial stage. A number of major problems arose because of this, problems that it was only possible to solve in new social-historical conditions. At the same time processes of a more

purely cinematic character also took place, for instance, an increase in the length of film. Longer films required a more serious approach to the script and the necessity arose to engage professional authors as script-writers.

An important role in creating professional script-writing in the Russian cinema must be assigned to Valentin Turkin (1887-1958), later a professor at the State Film Institute. Turkin's scripts and publicistic writing showed that cinema is essentially dramatic and that the film script must be based on a clear, well-constructed plot. Turkin fought for the creation of professional script-writing and a firm association between the cinema and writers. But major writers to all intents did not work for the cinema at this time, and directors very often wrote their own scripts from literary sources.

There was more perceptible progress on a number of other questions. Fyodor Chaliapine, who was not only a great singer, but also an outstanding dramatic actor, radically changed his attitude towards the cinema from his initial refusal to act for the camera, saying that film acting would lower his dignity as an actor. The enormous, obvious divergence between the cinema's popularity, its artistic possibilities, and the real value of individual films decreased. The use of different camera ranges, different types of editing, and other methods of screen narration made the cinema more like literature and theatre in its variety of artistic means. The possibilities of 'silent' cinema were limited in many other essential respects.

Yet within this framework the cinema continued to develop. Progressive artists persistently strove towards realism, as more and more expressive means were discovered and mastered. During the First World War, Protazanov's *The Queen of Spades* (Pushkin), regarded by cinema historians as one of the best pre-revolutionary Russian films, was made against a background of mediocre films. Protazanov both directed and wrote the script for this film. His work clearly shows

new principles in adapting literary classics for the screen. The script accentuates the composition, characters, and other elements of the work in close conformance with the original. This film continues to make a forceful impression even today by its lifelike characters, as acted by Mozhukhin (German), Orlova (Liza), Shebueva and Duvan (the Countess). Protazanov's directing was marked by confidence and naturalness here; close-ups (still a novelty in cinema) were used tactfully and unobtrusively, as were the editing methods. An important role in the film's success belongs to the cameraman Evgeny Slavinsky (1877-1950), one of the most interesting of the older generation of Russian cameramen. In 1901 he headed the photography group on the Russian icebreaker *Ermak*, and in 1908 he made a film of the *Ermak's* voyage through the ice for the French cinema company Pathé. In *The Queen of Spades* Slavinsky created interesting frame compositions, lighting effects, and other technical touches.

*The Queen of Spades* was by no means the only realistic film made in this period. In searching for genuine paths for the new art-form, the best film-makers rightly turned to screen adaptations of literary classics, theatrical plays, and paintings. True, in the war years the number of such adaptations was very low compared to films of other genres. Yet it was this thematic section of the cinema repertoire that produced the most interesting results. Protazanov and Gardin actively sought out talented actors of the realistic school for film-acting. Among them were Mozhukhin, Gzovskaya, Orlova, Lysenko, Preobrazhenskaya. The latter of these, Olga Preobrazhenskaya, later a well-known Soviet director, at this period successfully interpreted the roles of Liza (Turgenev's *A Nest of the Gentry*, 1915), Elena (Turgenev's *On the Eve*, 1915), Natasha Rostova (Lev Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, 1914-1915), and made her directing debut as Gardin's co-director in *The Young Lady-Peasant Girl* (Pushkin, 1916).

Among other interesting adaptations for the screen from

this time we should mention *The Portrait of Dorian Grey* (Oscar Wilde), in which Vsevolod Meyerhold made his debut as a cinema director, as well as acting the role of Lord Henry. Cameraman on this film was Aleksandr Levitsky (1885-1965), rightly considered the founder of Russian cinematic photography. In the early years of Russian film production, he made nearly 100 feature, documental, and educational films, and over the whole of his long life (60 years in the cinema) he made nearly 300 films. At the beginning of the new era in our country's life he filmed events of the October Revolution and Lenin himself. In the latter part of his life Levitsky was a professor at the State Film Institute.

The best pre-revolutionary films, especially adaptation of the classics, showed a deep understanding of the author's conception, a well-composed script, a cohesive acting ensemble, an orientation towards realistic acting methods, and confident professionalism on the part of the director. Apart from those films mentioned above, we should mention as examples of these qualities: *Late-Blooming Flowers* (Chekhov), directed by Boris Sushkevich (1887-1946), better known as a major film and theatrical actor. The virtues of screen adaptation we have listed above can be fully attributed to Sushkevich's other films. Working at that time in the studio of the Moscow Art Theatre, he drew a whole group of his actor friends into film work. They studied the cinema attentively, went into all aspects of this art-form, and made the films *When the Heart-strings Sound* (a melodrama), *The Cricket on the Hearth* (Dickens, screen version of a stage production), *Still Waters* (from a novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz), and *The Hurricane* (a drama).

Chekhov's story does not have a high-pitched, dynamic plot, but Sushkevich and his group were able to transform this small novella, unsuitable at first glance for adaptation to the screen, into an interesting and realistic film. The director concentrated his attention on disclosing the main figures' characters: the provincial girl from a gentry family, Marusya

Priklonskaya, Doctor Toporkov, an able man who has pushed his way up in life, yet wasted his life in chasing after material possessions, Marusya's brother, the idle drunkard Egorushka, and their weak-willed mother. Sushkevich, Baklanova, Geirot, Deikun, and others closely studied the story and found convincing equivalents for the literary characters on the screen. The characters are vivid and the film's general atmosphere is very Chekhovian.

We must also mention the negative phenomena that were highly noticeable in the cinema during the war years. The cinema left its political indifference behind, but chauvinistic propaganda influenced it heavily. Treatment of the war theme did not go beyond patriotic cheering and the mouthing of slogans. Hundreds of these films were made in an amateurish fashion not only in Moscow and Petrograd; but also in Kiev, Odessa, Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk), Yalta, Kharkov, and other cities. Most of these productions were crude and naive, and their aesthetic aims were vague. The growing attention of the government and bourgeoisie, which insistently expanded production of military propaganda films, resulted in speculative stock-jobbing and prevented raising the cinematic repertoire's cultural level. Hacks and profiteers directly linked to their clients—representatives of the tsarist government—continued to produce artistically impoverished films of the most reactionary types.

This situation did not change after the bourgeois revolution in 1917. Under new slogans, production of films having nothing to do with the people's interests continued, even increasing. Guided by the cinema audiences' undeveloped tastes, genuinely revolutionary themes were replaced by such concoctions as *Mysteries of the Secret Police*, *The Secrets of the House of the Romanovs*, *Traitor to Russia*, *Myasoedov*, *Satan Triumphant*, etc. However, the October Revolution, when the people under the guidance of the Bolsheviks came to power, did not find the Russian cinema in such a totally pathetic condition. There were also people working in cinema

who, although not always immediately or without hesitation, made a new start and actively participated in creating the new Soviet cinema. These directors, script-writers, actors, cameramen, and artists of the old Russian cinema were not few in number, as we shall see.



## CHAPTER 2

### FIRST STEPS (THE TWENTIES)

The October Revolution opened up real possibilities for the all-round use of the cinema for the good of the people. However, the new cinema did not emerge from the void. It could only continue to develop and become, in Lenin's definition, 'the most important art', if it absorbed and mastered the best from all spheres of culture. Progressive cinema historians throughout the world acknowledge that the artistic development of world cinema moved more quickly after 1917, for a genuine art of the cinema had been born—for the first time conditions were created making the creative aspect of film production more important than the commercial aspect. The influence that cinema of the socialist country had on the rest of the world, (where, as the noted French film historian George Sadoul observed, cinema was returned to the working people) played a decisive role in the further development of this new art-form.

The victory of the October 1917 Socialist Revolution initiated a new era in the history of mankind. The new programme adopted at the RSDLP(B) Eighth Congress in 1919 included a section on art, which placed cinema alongside libraries, adult education schools, people's universities, and other institutions of extra-mural education aimed at 'the self-education and development of the workers and peasants'. This programme also noted the necessity of 'making all the treasures of art open and accessible to the working people'.\*

The first Soviet organ to use the cinema in conjunction

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\* *The CPSU in Resolutions and Decisions Adopted at Congresses, Conferences, and Plenary Sessions*, Politicheskaya Literatura Publishing House, Moscow, 1970, v. II, p. 49 (in Russian).

with lectures was the Extra-Mural Division of the State Commission on the People's Education and its sub-division on cinema. The Extra-Mural Division was organised on November 9, 1917, i.e., on the third day after the establishment of the Soviet government. It was headed by Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lenin's wife and close associate in the field of culture, and one of the leading figures in the Communist Party.

Lenin said on many occasions: 'Art belongs to the people. Its roots should be deeply implanted in the very thick of the labouring masses. It should be understood and loved by these masses'. \* Leninist teaching was a mighty weapon for those who fought on the cultural front in the ideological struggle. This struggle, which was often tense and fierce, was historically inevitable and natural; it became the ideological and aesthetic school through which all of Soviet art, including cinema, passed.

At first the Soviet government allowed privately-owned cinema companies to continue to exist, but established ideological and economic control over them. At the same time the Party undertook a broad series of measures to actively include cinema in agitation and propaganda work. At Lenin's initiative agitation trains were set up which included cinema cars and projection facilities and showed films to the population free of charge.

The newness of the tasks that now arose in cinema was obvious. Anatoly Lunacharsky, then People's Commissar for Education, wrote: 'The problem is to create an entirely new spirit in this field of art and education.... We should remember that the socialist state should give a socialist spirit to "moving picture shows"'. \*\*

Lunacharsky suggested focusing attention primarily on

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\* Clara Zetkin, 'My Recollections of Lenin' in *V.I. Lenin On Literature and Art*, Moscow, 1970, p. 251.

\*\* *Lunacharsky on Cinema*, Iskusstvo, Moscow, 1965, p. 19 (in Russian).

newsreels and making scientific and feature films for propaganda purposes.

Cinema committees were organised in Moscow and Petrograd (now Leningrad) after the October Revolution; their literary divisions examined themes and made decisions on various questions concerning film-making. Major writers like Maxim Gorky, Alexei Tolstoy, Aleksandr Serafimovich, Valery Bryusov, Andrei Bely, Aleksandr Blok, Kornei Chukovsky, and others took part in drawing up lists of themes for films.

The October Revolution also had an enormous influence on cinema workers engaged in the private studios. Under the influence of the Revolution's ideas the better part of script-writers, directors, artists, cameramen, and actors gradually shifted to new paths and began to make films in response to the new tasks. But this did not happen overnight.

Open hostility to the new order was shown by bourgeois cinema entrepreneurs and some cinematographers who did not immediately grasp the meaning of the historical, revolutionary changes, instead running away from the new life, and joining the ranks of the emigrants. The Soviet cinema took its first steps in the difficult conditions of the Civil War and foreign military intervention. Private cinema companies continued to exist here and there, offering up films with such expressive titles as *A Love Cursed, Stifled, and Destroyed, Love ... Hate ... Death, The Devil's Scherzo, Crushed and Trampled was My Fragrant Blossom, A Symphony of Madness, Swept by Life's Storm*, etc. There was nothing in these films to recall the October Revolution; they entirely reflected the past, the last days of the bourgeoisie in Russia, and were melancholy, pessimistic, and despairing. Sabotage of the country's revolutionary transformations also took sharper forms: private owners of cinema theatres hid and destroyed cinema equipment, stocks of raw film, copies of films, etc. One after another private cinema companies went out of business. Realising that sabotage was futile, many businessmen

closed their businesses (studios, theatres), and some of them emigrated. Profound changes were about to take place.

On August 27, 1919 on behalf of the government of the young revolutionary republic Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars V. I. Lenin signed a decree nationalising 'the whole of the photographic and cinematographic trade and industry' and transferring them to the control of one of the people's commissariats. This document was extremely important for the cinema, an art which is connected with a complex technology and large material resources, and from the beginning been dependent on entrepreneurs and financiers in all countries.

During his years abroad, Lenin had become closely acquainted with cinema in the West and came to the conclusion that 'as long as cinema is in the hands of crude speculators, it will produce more harm than benefit, and often perverts the masses with plays of highly dubious content'.\*

This is especially noticeable in bourgeois cinema today, where so many more or less glossy films depict murder, sex, all types of perversions, and pathological subjects. The cinema businessman's greed for 'profit at any price' and intention to maintain and manipulate the audience's political naiveté and moral and aesthetic backwardness is even more cynical today, although it is often disguised. A special pseudo-culture has been created to this end.

Lenin outlined concrete measures for transforming the cinema into what would be the truly most important art. In his famous conversation with Clara Zetkin he spoke of the principles on which Soviet art should be based from the very beginning: the distinction should be made between 'a spectacle' and 'a truly great art', for although 'a spectacle'

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\* V. Ya. Bonch-Bruевич, *Lenin and the Cinema. Personal Recollections*. From the collection of documents and materials. 'The Most Important Art. Lenin on the Cinema'. Iskusstvo, Moscow, 1973, p. 116 (in Russian).

or, in other words, 'a more or less attractive amusement' is permissible and has a right to existence, 'our workers and peasants deserve more than just a spectacle. They have received the right to a truly great art... Our intellectuals will have to solve noble and vital tasks in order to create this. When they understand and solve these tasks they will have effaced their debt to the proletarian revolution'....\*

The intellectuals of whom Lenin spoke soon began to carry out their duty in cinema. In the 1920s Soviet cinematographers began to make films that realistically and with the philosophical depth characteristic of our literary classics disclosed the new thoughts and feelings of a people who had consciously entered into the historical arena. Socialist artists were urged to depict life from a broad historical perspective, to find appropriate images for the ideas of unity and fraternity between working people, to reject the bourgeois cash ethic, injustice, and oppression.

With the nationalisation of the Russian cinema a new era was opened in its history.

Honest cinematographers accepted the October Revolution in their hearts. They understood that the cause they served could not only enrich private entrepreneurs, but also help the people to be the first to build a new life based on just principles. Among these film-makers were Lev Kuleshov, Vladimir Gardin, Ivan Peristiani, Vladimir Egorov and many others.

One of the pioneers of the Soviet cinema was Yury Zhelyabuzhsky, son of the famous Russian actress, Maria Andreeva, Maxim Gorky's wife. In 1919 together with some other film enthusiasts, Zhelyabuzhsky filmed Lev Tolstoy's story *Polikushka*. The main role was played by the outstanding actor from the Moscow Art Theatre, Ivan Moskvina. This film's artistic qualities immediately raised cinema to a new height. 'In my opinion, *Polikushka* is a major step towards

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\* *Lenin on Culture and Art*, Iskusstvo, Moscow, 1956, pp. 522-523 (in Russian).

the scrupulous transmission on the screen — although this may sound strange — of a literary work's purely literary and psychological qualities,' wrote Anatoly Lunacharsky, one of the leading figures in Soviet culture and a close associate of Lenin.

In Gorky's opinion, *Polikushka* showed people's characters and inner actions, not just their external collisions.

It is significant that the adaptation of literary classics played such an important role at the very outset of the Soviet cinema. This was an expression of our cultural inheritance — a principle that Lenin always defended, in particular in his struggle against the nihilist attitudes of 'the leftists' towards our artistic and cultural heritage. 'The cinema would seem to continue the language and forms of fiction, as well as its poetics', film historian Vitaly Zhdan writes today. 'The problems that arose one after another before literature led directly to cinema. No matter how highly we regard the expressive possibilities of the cinema as a new art, we should always keep in mind that the audience's encounter with cinema comes after Shakespeare and Pushkin, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky'.\*

The artistic methods used in *Polikushka* made it an original and in many respects innovative film. Its directors (Zhe-lyabuzhsky directed it together with A. Sanin) made use of close-ups, perspectives, moving shots, parallel editing, and visual metaphors, all of which were new at the time. In order to convey the unhurried rhythm of Tolstoy's story on the screen the directors concentrated on the acting, which was slow, thoughtful, and psychologically intense. For instance, the main character Polikey returns from town: shaking off his sleepiness, he removes his hat, putting his hand into it to draw out the packet of money. But the packet is not there — he's lost it. Close-up of Polikey. A great deal was written about this close-up at the time. 'A man screaming in the cinema!

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\* *A Short History of the Soviet Cinema*, Iskusstvo, Moscow, 1969, p. 21 (in Russian).



A man! In the cinema! We shall not talk about Moskvín as an actor. He is a great artist. Like everything that comes out of Russia, this film touches the human soul'—these remarks by A. Aleinikov are reminiscent of the opinion expressed by the German film critic Holitscher who observed that the silent shot of the mortally terrified Polikushka with staring eyes and mouth wide-open in a frightened scream seems as if it has sound.

In the United States *Polikushka* was recognised as one of the year's ten best films in 1924.

The famous Russian nineteenth-century satirist Saltykov-Schedrin said that in period of transition, when the past is breaking down and the new still taking shape, art usually takes one of two forms: either a vague, romantic welcome for the future or a hearkening back into the realm of shadows, towards everything out-moded and out-lived that stands in the way of the 'new. One can easily find both these trends in early Soviet films. One of their basic traits is their transference of artistic forms from the past (sometimes the very distant past) to depict new relations. The film *Children Teach Their Elders* tells of how a little girl warns of her father's amoral action, (he was going to hide grain in time of famine) and is based on a ballad by the eighteenth-century English poet Robert Southey about Bishop Hatton, a ballad that was widely-known in Russia in Zhukovsky's translation.

Many noted writers, among them Alexei Tolstoy, Aleksandr Blok, Maxim Gorky, Valery Bryusov, and Vladimir Mayakovsky took an active part in discussions on the problem of creating the Soviet cinema.

Mayakovsky had long given attention to this question. In one of his 'manifestoes' from 1922 he wrote:

*For you cinema is a spectacle.*

*For me it is more like a way of contemplating  
the world.*

*Cinema is a conductor of progress.*

*Cinema is a renewer of literature.*

'Almost a contemplation of the world'—and this is not

just eloquence. Mayakovsky saw cinema as the new art most corresponding to the spirit of the times. It was the 'untraditional' quality of cinema that attracted him: life shown as it is, undeformed by the prism of the theatre, literature, and painting, which in the pre-revolutionary years frequently departed from the traditions of realism, and gave way to the influence of decadent modernism.

Mayakovsky wrote several screenplays, as well as acting in the films *Creation Can't be Bought*, *The Young Lady and the Hooligan*, and *Shackled by Film*. He retained his interest in film to the end of his life. Shortly before his death, upon learning of that Turgenev's novel *Fathers and Sons* was to be filmed, he offered himself as a candidate for the role of Bazarov.

Defining the tasks of the young Soviet cinema, Lenin suggested setting aside certain definite proportions of the cinema programme for propaganda films, informational films, and films of entertainment. 'Lenin said to me,' Lunacharsky recalled, 'that production of new films filled with Communist ideas and reflecting Soviet reality should begin with newsreels....'\*

The tasks formulated by Lenin for the Soviet cinema were of three types: the cinema should inform the working people about news from the Civil War front, and about the building of the Soviet state—this task was primarily performed by the newsreel; the cinema should explain current Party and Government slogans to the viewers (agitation films, including feature films); and finally, the cinema diffused scientific and technical knowledge among the working people, as well as popularising literary classics.

The newsreel was particularly quick and clear to show the new traits of the Soviet cinema. The bourgeois newsreel showed all sorts of sensational happenings, the life of the Tsar, official receptions, etc. From the very beginning the Soviet newsreel took an entirely different line. A new life

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\* *Lenin on the Cinema*,... p. 163.

was unrolling throughout the country and cameramen, who had to economise on every metre of their limited film supplies, recorded this new life: military operations by the young Red Army against the White Guards, bandits, and interventionists; peace negotiations with the Germans in Brest-Litovsk; the liberation of the Crimea from Wrangel, the conferring of the Order of the Red Banner on the First Cavalry Army; the All-Russian congresses of Soviets; the Comintern congresses, and other political events. Newsreels recorded major events in the life of the fraternal Soviet republics: a parade of soldiers and a demonstration of working people in Kiev, the proclamation of Soviet government in Armenia and Azerbaijan.... The first newsreels included many documental sketches about the new, peaceful life that was being consolidated throughout the country hour by hour, not just day by day. There were many documental shots about the new socialist attitude to work (the All-Russian voluntary Saturday work-day), or a short newsreel about successes in technology at the service of the people: the electric plough, the opening of the Shatura electrical power station, the completion of the building of Kazan railway terminal in Moscow.

And so the Soviet newsreel was the first to be made. Once, during the Civil War, the Latvian Eduard Tisse, who later worked on the famous *Battleship 'Potemkin'*, was filming a newsreel shot on Moscow's Red Square. Lenin was seeing off one of the many Red Army detachments heading for the front, and the cameraman pointed his camera at Lenin. This footage has been preserved and is frequently included in documental films about Lenin. But Lenin pointed to the soldiers and said to Tisse: 'Film them, they're going off to fight for the Soviet state.'

Soviet in spirit and content, the cinema began with revolutionary newsreels, footage showing the Civil War fronts, and chronicles relating the people's labour exploits.

The first documental films reflecting ordinary people's new destinies, new characters, and the joy of liberated labour,

were the forerunners such brilliant later films as *The Battleship 'Potemkin'*, *Mother*, *Arsenal*, and *Earth*.

The first short subjects produced by the Soviet cinema.

Petrograd 1917. A cameraman films a demonstration of workers and soldiers passing through the streets of the revolutionary city. The slogans on their placards are clearly visible: 'Peace' and 'Freedom'.... A soldier knocks a symbol of the old order—the tsarist double-headed eagle—off shop signs.... At the front the war is continuing, but Russian and German soldiers leave their trenches to embrace and kiss each other. We seem to hear the voices of soldiers who suffered so much in this pointless war, saying: 'Enough, we're fed up', in the background.

...Lenin stands before us in the flesh. There are only a few such documents on film. The leader of the October Revolution did not like to pose for the movie cameras. Cameramen often had to catch him on the sly. But here we see Lenin seeing off Red Army soldiers leaving Red Square directly for the Civil War fronts; speaking from a podium; at the Third Comintern Congress; perched on the steps leading to the stage, intently noting down the theses of his speech; Lenin during a visit to the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy with a group of scholars and technicians, observing the electrical plough at work in the experimental stage; at home chatting with an American guest on an official visit.

As we watch this faded chronicle today, we feel the heroic atmosphere of those times.

Fourteen countries tried to crush the Revolution and partition Russia. They supported the White Guards with troops, armaments, provisions, clothing, and money.

'The Revolution is in danger!' Lenin appealed. The whole people transformed itself into an army. We see Kalinin, Dzerzhinsky, Lunacharsky, and Kuibyshev speaking to those who were about to depart for the front.

The talented military commanders Egorov, Kotovsky, Blyucher, Budyonny, Parkhomenko, Uborevich, and Frunze

lead their troops. The twenty-two-year-old regimental commander Tukhachevsky and the legendary Chapaev look out at us from the screen.

During the Civil War, Latvian battalions, Hungarians and Poles, Czechs and Serbs fought shoulder to shoulder with Russian troops to defend the Revolution.

The struggle was difficult. The young state had to contend with new enemies—ruin, famine, and epidemics. Notices on the walls read: 'Remember that every rag can warm a Red Army soldier's feet.' The working people of Moscow, accompanied by Lenin, Kalinin, and Petrovsky, go out on the All-Russian voluntary Saturday work-day.

The young Soviet state chased away its enemies from one border to the next. Cinematic footage shows how the interventionist forces beat a hasty retreat from the Crimea, run from Vladivostok, and sail away from the White Sea shores. What did they leave behind? Only crosses on graves in many cemeteries. The people rose up, squared their shoulders, and marched forward to a new life.

December 1922. Delegates to the First Congress of Soviets stream towards the entrance to the Bolshoy Theatre. Russians and Uzbeks, Ukrainians and Tadjiks, Byelorussians, Tatars, and Kazakhs cast their vote for the unity of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Newsreel footage preserves and conveys events' outward appearance with total accuracy. But their inner meaning, the participants' psychology and their inner world is less accessible to the newsreel.

Documental films began to function as more than just chronicles. For a while they were the only cinematic means of interpreting the new reality, while other forms of cinema were still developing. Dziga Vertov should be mentioned in this connection, his searchings, experiments, and achievements in the documental field, his twenty-three 'issues' of a newsreel entitled *Kino-pravda* (Cinema Truth), and his three major documental films: *Stride On*, *Soviet*, *One-Sixth of the*

*World and Three Songs about Lenin*. Dziga Vertov used old newsreel and edited it together with new material which he filmed in a highly original manner, freshly and sharply—with shifting perspective, accelerated movement and slow-motion, using the ‘stop-camera’ method, etc. These new (for the time) methods enhanced the documental film’s possibilities and in conjunction with bold editing made Vertov’s films vivid, emotional, and convincing.

True, some of Vertov’s theoretical statements, of ‘manifestoes’ often set up a false opposition between the documental and fictional film. This does not lessen our interest in this great cinema publicist, but it does make us somewhat cautious in evaluating his heritage for today’s cinema. All the more so, as Vertov’s films and his theoretical writings are studied in many countries and are often distorted and used by some cinematographers to justify their own unrealistic positions. Vertov’s ideas can only be seen concretely and historically in their organic link with the general cinematic context in which they evolved. As we said earlier, some of Vertov’s methods of interpretation on film arose as a result of the lack of or immaturity of other cinematic forms at the time, above all the fictional film. This is why those who later copied Vertov’s methods—and this frequently occurred in documental cinema—were not able to rise to his heights. The general traits of Vertov’s method are much more fruitful today—the freshness of his perceptions of documents and facts, the originality of his vision and, most of all, his social acuity, political farsightedness, and realism in appraising contemporary events.

Soviet newsreels and documental films were made everywhere where production facilities were available in the early years. Production conditions were often extremely primitive, however. Nearly all the reserves of film stock had been destroyed by the bourgeois cinema entrepreneurs. Defective film and old camera equipment often had to be used. Film developing and printing was carried out in half-ruined laborato-

ries. It is no surprise, therefore, that footage that has been preserved leaves a great deal to be desired from the technical point of view. We should give cameramen from those years their due—they showed great enthusiasm, inventiveness, and a true spirit of self-sacrifice.

The first agitational films (agit-films) began to be produced in 1918-1919. They were films on topical questions of the day. They were shown on the squares in front of railway stations, docks, everywhere—especially in the outlying areas and hinterlands—and at agitation centres throughout the country, accompanied by political meetings and the reading of reports. These films were often made with the participation of experienced journalists, writers, and cinema-makers. They often explained the meaning of the Red Army, how it differed from the tsarist army, and recreated moments in the Civil War. The titles of these films were highly indicative: Mayakovsky's *To the Front*, Zhelyabuzhsky's *What Were You?*, Peristiani's *Father and Son* and *Days of Struggle*, Kuleshov's *At the Red Front*, etc. Film historians later pointed out the excessive straightforwardness in the structure of these films and their lack of stylistic unity. One can hardly disagree, for the agit-films contained a good many elements from the old films: their forms, their methods of interpreting reality, their plot structures, and acting styles. But all this was adapted to reveal a new content.

The mastering of the new themes took place in complicated circumstances. Along with the films listed above that directly reflected the Red Army's heroic struggle in the Civil War, many agit-films were also made on other subjects. Zhelyabuzhsky and Novikov made a film about Party policy in the villages (*The Household Agitator*). Agitational films urged the population to hand in their arms (*The Last Cartridge*), collect warm things for the front (*Everything for the Front*), struggle against economic ruin (*Repair the Locomotives, Sow the Fields*). Agit-films also dealt with political themes: the struggle for peace (*War to War*), international solidarity



between working people (*Towards the Bright Reign of the Third International*), etc. There were also many educational films on hygiene: *Asian visitors*—on the struggle against cholera, *The Mechanism of Normal Childbirth*, *The Struggle Against Rodents*, *Victims of the Cellars*, *Children are the Flowers of Life*. Lenin referred many times to the usefulness of films in industrial propaganda in order to study the best workers' work.

And so although criticism of agit-films is justified (they over-simplified their subjects, they were schematic, many situations were unjustified, they dealt too straightforwardly with certain themes), nevertheless there were good films, too, among the more than seventy such films made. Many enthusiastic, talented, and skilled writers and film-makers worked on them. They did not always succeed in overcoming all difficulties—because of their lack of experience in new working methods, the vagueness of the genre itself (agit-film), or because of the general maladjustment in the film industry at the time. Yet, given these complex conditions, along with many mediocre, now-forgotten films, there were also many interesting and purposeful films that signalled the transition to full-length fictional films on revolutionary themes. The most important agit-film in this respect is Gardin's *The Hammer and Sickle*, filmed in 1921 with a script by Gorchilin and Eduard Tisse as cameraman.

A major director in pre-revolutionary cinema, Vladimir Gardin came to Soviet cinema with the firm wish to be as useful as possible to the new cause. He was later one of the founders of the first State Film School, which trained young Soviet cinema-makers. Many students from this school soon dominated Soviet cinema (Vsevolod Pudovkin, Sergei Komarov, Boris Barnet, Vladimir Fogel, Pyotr Galadzhev, Porfiry Podobed, and others).

*The Hammer and Sickle* was first conceived of as an ordinary agit-film, but the script turned out so well in its treatment of a very topical theme, and was so large in scope, that it

contained everything for the making of a full-length, feature film. The school director Gardin supported the idea of making it as a full-length effort and himself took on the responsibility of directing it.

*The Hammer and Sickle* focuses on the life of the farm-labourer Andrei, played by Vsevolod Pudovkin, later one of the leading directors in Soviet and world cinema. The other roles were also played by students from the school.

The story deals with the life of Andrei and those close to him—the Gorbov family, poverty-stricken and cruelly exploited by the village kulak. Together with Pyotr and Agasha Gorbov, Andrei leaves his native village for Moscow. There all three find work at a factory. In an effort to show Soviet reality, the film-makers included documental footage showing Moscow's streets, markets, and railways. The film has a broad social background, which was unusual in cinema at the time. The talent of those who made the film determined the story's realistic look on the screen—forecasting the realism of the best Soviet films to come. There were also serious defects—the characters' sketchiness, the shakiness of the plot, and the shallow treatment of the characters' destinies. Nonetheless, the treatment of the main heroes' lives (their work at the city factory, Andrei and Agasha's marriage, the men's departure for the Red Army, Pyotr's death at the front, Agasha's return to the village with her child and renewed dependence on the kulaks) was fresh and absorbing. The film's conclusion—the wounded Andrei's return to his village and his unmasking of a counter-revolutionary kulak who concealed grain during the famine—drew audiences into problems that were of immediate concern to all Soviet society at the time. The young actors in *The Hammer and Sickle* had a large part in making the film a success. The film contained certain elements from the agit-film, but it was also a serious feature film in which the young Soviet cinema confronted a vital theme of the day—the union of the working class and the peasantry.

The Soviet government undertook active measures to set the film industry into working order again and to help it develop purposively. The uncoordinated, primitive film studios were transformed into a state industry for film production furnished with trained film-makers and technical means. The country did not yet have factories for the production of equipment used in filming, projection, and other aspects of cinema, and so it was necessary to import even supplies of raw film stock. But even in these difficult conditions, the Soviet Government brought together many older, experienced film-makers and constantly encouraged efforts by new film enthusiasts who doggedly and imaginatively organised the film industry, thus making it possible for Soviet cinema to increase production and gain in artistic and social authority.

Dziga Vertov, already well-known as a documental film director, totally dominated the early years of the Soviet cinema. Having begun with the newsreel, which he gave new content that went far beyond this genre's traditional framework, Vertov worked out the principles for a new cinematic form—the documental film based on images. Film historians and theoreticians continue to study all aspects of Vertov's artistic heritage in depth to the present day. Despite Vertov's errors and misconceptions, his heritage contains many fruitful ideas and talented accomplishments. His film *Kino-Eye* was awarded at an international exhibition in Paris. Another of Vertov's films *Stride On, Soviet!* was defined by its director as 'the first symphony of liberated labour', and he called *One-Sixth of the World* 'a poem that steps into the future of the Soviet state' (from the collection *From Cinema History*, Moscow, 1959, p. 31). Historians of the Soviet cinema observe that in his best films, which had a vital importance for his own work and Soviet cinema as a whole, Vertov showed himself to be not only an experimenter who ceaselessly sought new artistic means for the cinema, but also a highly meaningful artist who lay the path towards socialist realism in cinema.

Mention should also be made here of the significant con-

tribution made by documental director Esther Shub who combed film archives in the 1920s and made richly compiled historical-documental films such as *The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty* and *The Russia of Nicholas II and Lev Tolstoy* on the basis of pre-revolutionary archive materials. These films had great emotional power and intellectual force.

The Soviet cinema was ever more confidently finding its true path.

Aleksandr Ivanovsky made an historical-revolutionary film *Castle and Fortress*, based on Olga Forsh's *Clothed in Stone* and including elements of Pyotr Schegolev's *The Secret Prisoner*. The director succeeded in making the narrative highly emotional by emphasising the contrast between the noisy life of the Emperor's court and the tragic lot of the revolutionaries buried alive in the dungeons of the infamous Alexeevsky Ravelin of the Peter and Paul fortress. Having thus established the historical-revolutionary drama in Soviet cinema, Ivanovsky later made many successful films in this genre.

The director Zhelyabuzhsky continued to successfully bring the Russian classics to the screen. Taking Pushkin's *The Stationmaster* as his basis, he made the film *The Collegiate Registrar*, the main role of which was played by the Moscow Art Theatre's Ivan Moskvina, who had been so outstanding in *Polikushka*.

The pre-revolutionary cinema was predominately orientated towards melodrama, depicting melodramatic events in the private lives of its individualist heroes. Social themes were almost never presented on the screen. Individual exceptions did not negate this general rule. The new Soviet cinema developed along the lines of fundamentally different principles. The people had now entered onto the stage of history and men's social ties now inevitably had to occupy the center of attention in art. Rebuilding the artistic scale of values proved to be a difficult task. Early films whose creators sincerely wanted to keep pace with the times frequently showed major historical events and social conflicts only as a background against

which the same old melodramas were played out in the pre-revolutionary manner. Characteristic of this failing were the first post-revolutionary films made by the talented pre-revolutionary actor and director Ivan Peristiani (1870-1959).

Peristiani is remembered in Soviet film history above all for his famous *Red Devils*, but he is also known as the director of the first Soviet Georgian film which, although with certain qualifications, was also the first Soviet film on an historical-revolutionary theme: *Arsen Dzhordzhiashvili (The Murder of General Gryaznov, 1921)*.

This film depicts many events in the Revolution of January 1905. News of defeats come from the front of the Russo-Japanese War. Gatherings take place in the factories and railway stations. A strike flares up and the workers take a policeman away in a wheelbarrow. The police chase off the strikers—this crowd scene three years before Eisenstein's *Strike* reflects the scale of the events and conveys a strong impression of the atmosphere and the visual aspect of the times. To counteract the growth of the revolutionary events, General Gryaznov insists on a punitive expedition. The workers do not yet fully understand the laws of class struggle and a decision is made to kill the general. The lot falls to the main character. He carries out his duty, but is captured by soldiers and shot after being condemned by a military tribunal.

These are the basic events in the film.

Critics acknowledged the film's virtues (above all, the very choice of a revolutionary theme), but noted its serious faults, too, such as its concession to 'bourgeois cinema influence', elements of 'individualism' in the film, and its accent on detailed investigation of the hero's psychology.

The first Soviet films on revolutionary themes had very much the same positive and negative qualities as this film. The Ukrainian films *Two Days* and *Night Cabman* had similarly constructed scripts. And, like *Arsen Dzhordzhiashvili* they were popular with audiences. However, it was obvious that these films were still basically cut along the same lines as pre-

revolutionary, melodramatic cinema. They did not really reflect the new feelings and thoughts experienced by people who had accomplished the Revolution to a sufficient extent.

But in treating social themes, Soviet film-makers could also find positive guideposts in pre-revolutionary cinema for, as we said earlier, the latter was not entirely reducible to melodramas concerning the sufferings of people cut off from life. Peristiani immediately afterwards made a film that no one could reproach for being old-fashioned. This was his two-part adventure film *Red Devils* (1923). The script had been written by the old Communist Pavel Blyakhin, based on his own story, and the film's heroes were adolescents who fought heroically against the anarchist Nestor Machno's counter-revolutionary gang. The film was phenomenally successful and a sequel was made, and much was later repeated and borrowed from this film. The press also praised the film, pointing out that it was entertaining, ideologically cohesive, realistic, and had a clear plot. This latter quality was also important, for at the beginning of the cinema's development after the October Revolution, some experimentors fell under the influence of various formalist currents in which '...the most absurd ideas were hailed as something new, and the supernatural and incongruous were offered as purely proletarian art and proletarian culture.'\*

The first successful films (*Polikushka*, *Castle and Fortress*, *Red Devils*, etc.) reaffirmed that simple, but often forgotten truth that audiences prefer realistic, action-packed films. The story of the three young heroes in *Red Devils* who performed amazing feats on the Civil War fronts, their passionate and stubborn struggle, and their triumph gave the film the characteristics of an heroic legend that reflected the era vividly.

Lev Kuleshov occupies a special place among the pioneers of the Soviet cinema. He foresaw the enormous possibilities of

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\* V.I.Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 336.

fictional feature films and dedicated his life to studying the nature of cinema, giving all his powers to creative activity and to teaching; many outstanding Soviet film-makers were Kuleshov's pupils. New editing principles, laws regulating the composition of the frame, and the expressiveness of the actor — all this was systematised by him and furnished material for his book *Cinema Art*. From our point of view today not everything in this book is accurate, above all the task itself — to formulate the laws for an art in an often very inflexible manner, and to give it a scientific base. In practice this often caused actors to lose their spontaneity and ability to improvise. But a large part of Kuleshov's work enabled an analytical approach to the search for creative principles to be worked out. Kuleshov later re-worked his book, taking into account criticism that had been made of it and enriched it with further discoveries from his own experience as a film-maker.

In the 1920s Kuleshov was not only a researcher and teacher, but also a director. Among his films the best-known were *The Unusual Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks*, *The Death Ray*, and *Dura Lex*. They reflect both the strong and weak sides of Kuleshov's method. The first of these films, based on a script by the Soviet poet Nikolai Aseev, was a political satire. Similar to a detective film — a genre already popular in Western cinema at the time — but with a touch of irony and parody, the director showed the adventures of the American Senator West who comes on a visit to the Soviet Union. The plot is filled with dramatic episodes. When Mr. West falls into the hands of blackmailers in Moscow, he at first thinks this proves everything he has heard about the Soviet Union at home: that it is a wild country populated with bloodthirsty savages. Then the police unmask the gang and free the American senator. Gradually he comes to realise that the real Soviet Union is not at all as propaganda shows it.

In his work on this film Kuleshov used a carefully elaborated director's script for the first time, breaking down the sequen-

ces frame by frame. The camera-work was done by one of the best cameramen, Aleksandr Levitsky, and the roles were played by young, gifted actors (Vsevolod Pudovkin, Aleksandra Khokhlova, Boris Barnet, Sergei Komarov, and others). This group headed by Kuleshov worked in a precise, well-coordinated way, and this film entered cinema history as a model of organised, well thought-out directing. Much of what Kuleshov used in this work (a detailed directing script showing the exact interaction between director and cameraman and actors, and tying together all the elements in the future film) later was widely adopted in film-making practice. Nonetheless, critics warned Kuleshov that his enthusiasm for the specifics of the cinema was somewhat one-sided and detracted attention from the most important point—ideological purposiveness—and brings him too close for comfort to formalism.

These warnings were justified by Kuleshov's next film, *The Death Ray*, which he himself termed a catalogue of methods worked out in his workshop. The film's subject was Soviet engineering invention of a device capable of igniting fuel at long range. This film caused its director a great deal of disappointment: he was justifiably reproached for having allowed his enthusiasm for montage and interesting camera angles, all the formal methods he loved, to make *The Death Ray* a grab-bag of acrobatic tricks, fights, and dynamic chases, while relegating content to second place. Kuleshov evidently re-examined his method from a critical stance, for his next film *Dura Lex* (1926) showed other sides of his directing ability and is regarded as one of the most outstanding silent films. Script-writer Victor Shklovsky, a talented writer of films and film critic, based his work on Jack London's *The Unexpected*, a severe, realistic, and profoundly psychological study of human character.

The action takes place during a river flood. Three gold prospectors are cut off from the world: Nilson (played by Sergei Komarov), his wife (Aleksandra Khokhlova), and



Deinin (Vladimir Fogel). There had been five prospectors at the beginning, but Deinin killed two of them and has earned the death sentence for himself. But there is no one to carry out the sentence—they must first return to civilisation. Both of the Nilsons guard the killer. This nerve-racking situation continues for days on end, and Deinin begs Nilson to do what must be done. Finally, circumstances force Nilson to take the law into his own hands and execute Deinin.

The film was compositionally compact, well-acted, and dramatically intense and involving. Kuleshov did not repeat the extremes of his two previous pictures, instead developing the realistic possibilities in his directing style. *Dura Lex* convincingly demonstrated the enormous aesthetic possibilities in the young art of cinema. In 1941 American film historian Lewis Jacobs wrote about the fusing of research and experimentation that became the basis of modern directing methods, and observed that Russian films from this period were the most important in the whole 'silent film' era.

Alongside highly-experienced, professional directors of fictional films and documental film-makers a whole pleiad of young cinematographers also appeared in Soviet cinema in the 1920s. Among them was Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948), later director of *Battleship 'Potemkin'*, *October*, *Aleksandr Nevsky*, and *Ivan the Terrible*, an extraordinarily many-faceted art historian with encyclopedic knowledge, a bold and original theoretician of art, an artist, script-writer, and a witty essay-writer who had an enormous influence on the development of cinema throughout the world.

Eisenstein came to the cinema from the theatre. He realised that films provide greater latitude for searches and experiments, and for dealing with the major social and political themes of the time. His *Strike* appeared in 1924, an epic treatment of the revolutionary class struggle between workers and industrial capitalists.

This first film made its young director famous. It had many strong points, ideologically and artistically speaking. The

life of the workers' settlement was shown in an interesting manner, for instance, and the specific atmosphere of the workers' daily lives was conveyed in a fresh way. The film's main feature was that the popular masses were its main hero and a sharp social conflict was shown instead of usual dramatic intrigue. The film's revolutionary pathos was its major virtue.

One year later the Soviet Government gave Eisenstein the task of making a film marking the twentieth anniversary of the First Russian Revolution of 1905. After *Strike the Battleship 'Potemkin'* appeared, taking further some of the principles mapped out in the director's first film, principles that were especially important for Soviet cinema.

At first Eisenstein and script-writer Nina Agadzhanova-Shutko planned to make a film encompassing all the events of 1905, but limitations in time prevented this. Then they decided to depict only the revolt of the Russian sailors on the battleship *Prince Potemkin of Tavria*, showing the spirit and typical features of the First Russian Revolution and the idea of the unity of the revolutionary people.

Profound study of the material, great enthusiasm for the subject, and wisps of his own childhood memories about the dramatic events of those years—all this helped Eisenstein to find a bold and innovative artistic form by which to convey the ardour of the revolutionary era on the screen.

The film crew worked enthusiastically, with inspiration, and this massive film was shot in only four months—it was also one of the least expensive in financial terms.

Soviet film-makers at the time did not yet have the powerful technology or possibilities possessed by the American cinema, for instance, which was backed by wealthy men who made fantastic profits out of movies. But Soviet film-makers had great revolutionary ideas and the new reality of a country building socialism. This proved more important and decisive.

The film was enormously successful at home and abroad.

Western European working-class audiences warmly greeted this film, which brought them the spirit of the Russian Revo-

lution. The film's screening in the Dutch Navy produced revolutionary disturbances among its sailors. In Germany reactionary forces took the film to court as a work 'aiding revolutionary disturbances'. Charlie Chaplin termed the film 'the world's best movie'. The American Academy of Cinema chose *Battleship 'Potemkin'* as the best film of 1926. The film was cut and mutilated by censors in all the bourgeois countries, yet it received the highest award — the Gold Medal — at the Paris Exhibition.

When Eisenstein arrived in America in 1930, American reactionaries showered him with petitions demanding that the 'red director who is more dangerous than a Red Army division' be thrown out.

Even today *Battleship 'Potemkin'* is not forgotten. A political struggle flared up over the film in Japan after the Second World War. A public committee was drawn up to assist in arranging showings of the film so that as many Japanese working-class audiences as possible could see it.

Progressive people throughout the world, noted filmmakers, writers, and political and cultural figures in England, India, France, Brazil, Germany, Japan, Italy, and Mexico have spoken and written about the enormous progressive influence of Eisenstein's film.

A forum made up of 117 film critics from many countries (during the World Exhibition in Brussels in 1958) elected *Battleship 'Potemkin'* the best film of all time.

Very few films in cinema history have had such an unusual destiny.

The power of *Battleship 'Potemkin'* is its historical truthfulness and the great idea of liberating people. 'The power of *Battleship "Potemkin"*,' said writer Aleksandr Fadeev, 'is that it shows an objective historical fact in the light of the leading idea of our time;... and that it transforms an historical episode into a fact of general significance, yet also making it the personal affair of millions of viewers.'

Eisenstein created a symbol of the mighty people's revo-

lution, which passed through individual failures and defeats to emerge triumphant in 1917. He wrote:

‘We are still in the midst of an overwhelming mass of contradictions which mankind must overcome before making a reality of what it proclaimed as its ideal in the enthusiasm of victory. The idea will dim and retreat from view, it will be attacked and be distorted and it will have the ground cut out from under it. But nonetheless, as it twists and turns under enemy blows, it will change form and gather strength, and will take on more concrete form as it progresses from a rough slogan and emerges from the heat of battle brilliant, renewed, tangible, and real’ (*Art of Film* magazine, 1965, No 12, p. 2).

Progressive film historians stress that Eisenstein and other film-makers of the period carried the idea of revolution onto the screen and raised Soviet cinema to the level of a great art.

*Battleship ‘Potemkin’* was not the only great achievement in Soviet cinema at this time. In 1926 *Mother* was released, and it also had an interesting, successful life on the screen. Its director, Vsevolod Pudovkin, is also famous in cinema history for his subsequent films—*The End of St. Petersburg*, *The Heir to Genghis Khan*, *Minin and Pozharsky*, *Suvorov*, *Admiral Nakhimov*, and *The Return of Vassily Bortnikov*, and is regarded as one of the founders—along with Eisenstein and Dovzhenko—of Soviet cinema.

Pudovkin came to cinema with a good knowledge of life, as well as broad and varied experience—qualities that are especially important for an artist. Before he became a film director, he had been at the front during the First World War, then studied in an educational institution that was later reorganised into the State Film Institute, studied chemistry, physics, and mathematics, and tried his hand at painting and music.

Pudovkin made films in various genres and worked in cinema in many capacities; he was one of the founders of the popular scientific film (*The Mechanics of the Brain*), and

acted in many roles, wrote scripts, researched aesthetic problems in cinema, made agit-films (*In Days of Struggle, The Hammer and Sickle, Famine ... Famine ... Famine*), adapted Lunacharsky's play *Chancellor and Metal Worker*, and took a successful crack at film comedy (*Chess Fever*).

Pudovkin possessed endless energy, joie de vivre, the ability to work hard, and ideological consistency. 'I wanted to become part of the Revolution,' he said, 'by the most profound, inner actions.' As a director, Pudovkin joined an all-encompassing knowledge of cinema aesthetics with a powerful artistic talent.

Pudovkin's *Mother*, based on Maxim Gorky's novel, dealt with the same historical era as *Battleship 'Potemkin'*, but the revolutionary material was approached in a different manner. The makers of *Mother* refer to the classical methods of the artistic reflection of life, focusing on individuals' characters and destinies. Unlike *Battleship 'Potemkin'* the revolutionary events were not only shown on a large scale, but also in the drama of individual characters who were depicted vividly and full-bloodedly. The young Russian worker, Pavel Vlasov (played by Nikolai Batalov, an actor from the Moscow Art Theatre) is transformed into a steadfast fighter for the Revolution before the viewer's very eyes. For the first time the image of a Bolshevik was shown accurately and in a lifelike manner. The press and audiences praised actress Vera Baranovskaya (also from the Art Theatre) who realistically, with a deep understanding of Gorky's work, disclosed the inner drama of the mother's destiny.

The film's director and its cameraman, Anatoly Golovnya, succeeded in conveying realistic, intense scenes from the revolutionary underground. If *Battleship 'Potemkin'* presented a broad picture of the revolutionary era, *Mother* focused attention on the psychology of the individual participant in the great revolutionary struggle.

We should not forget that cinema at this time was still silent, and the director sought his major expressive means in

camera-work. The best films were born of close partnerships: Eisenstein — Tisse, Pudovkin — Golovnya, Dovzhenko-Demutsky, etc. Various schools of thought and expressive styles developed freely. There were many highly talented Soviet cameramen of various national backgrounds from the very beginning. Drawing heavily on the traditions of realistic painting, each cameraman invested his work with his own individual characteristics.

There was something extraordinary about the way in which *Mother* was accepted enthusiastically by all its audiences, both in the Soviet Union and abroad. Pudovkin was put on guard by this reaction: he had tried to be innovative, and new methods in art do not always find acceptance with the mass of viewers. He began to wonder if he had given way to traditional tastes instead of renewing cinema and helping it to advance. Today we can see that his doubts were groundless. Over the years cinema has developed rapidly, but *Mother* has not aged or been forgotten. At the 1958 International Film Critics' Forum we mentioned earlier *Mother* was voted one of the twelve best films of all time. But at a time when this distance did not exist, Pudovkin could not analyse the situation easily.

In studies of Soviet cinema written abroad this circumstance is often forgotten, leading writers to false conclusions with regard to the character of cinema at the time. They often idealise the twenties and place them in opposition to all other periods in the development of Soviet cinema, seeing this as a time of carefree experiments filled with fruitful innovations and discoveries. This attitude is especially characteristic of 'New Left' film critics. They do not reach their erroneous conclusions because they have an inadequate knowledge of certain given films, but because of their conscious wish to shore up their own destructive, nihilist aesthetics through reference to Soviet cinema, in particular during the 1920s — in a distorted form, of course.

Obviously, it is difficult for the foreign researcher to understand the nature of the heated arguments, discussions,

and polemics in newspapers and journals at this period, arguments which had a very definite influence on film-makers and on film-making as a whole. It must be admitted that some of these problems are still not fully illuminated, although the twenties represent a key period in Soviet cinema history when principles that are still developing fruitfully today began to take shape, as well as several conceptions that later proved to have a negative influence.

In studying cinema history of the 1920s it is very important to have a clear conception of the ideological, social, and psychological context in which Soviet cinema was developing, as well as of similar processes taking place in other arts. It is impossible to understand many cinematic phenomena during this period without taking into account the activities and theoretical platforms of the various movements and groups. They were often united by their orientation towards 'left' conceptions—their rejection of continuity in art, their disregard for the classical heritage in art, the principles and traditions of a realistic reflection of life, and their use of modernist methods, which they regarded as innovative.

The crudely sociological interpretation made by critics of the popularity of *Battleship 'Potemkin'*, Vertov's films, and others gave rise to a number of false conclusions and unjustifiably generalised certain features of their practice, which were presented as a newly-discovered movement that, in its essence, was mandatory for all film-makers with consistently revolutionary positions.

This normative poetics were not, of course, created by that inspired revolutionary artist Eisenstein, but by 'left' theoreticians who were genetically linked with pre-revolutionary decadent movements in art. The maker of *'Potemkin'* could share his professional achievements with his colleagues, but he could not give them his artistic temperament and his inner experience in life—and it was this that determined his films' popularity. Film-makers who adopted 'left' poetics did not have any great triumphs, and their successes took

place not because of these poetics, but despite them. 'The theory of "the emotional script" and "intellectual cinema" that grew out of the incorrect interpretation of "*Potemkin*", wrote Sergei Yutkevich, 'was harmful to Eisenstein himself and to cinema as a whole, and hindered its progress for some time.'

Several films that were released after '*Potemkin*' were superficially similar to it stylistically, but did not possess its organic quality, its integral nature. Their imitative quality was noticeable, and their makers tried to compensate for their own lack of lyrical feeling by unjustifiably intensifying their expressive qualities. Even Eisenstein was not able to repeat his first success in the years to come: *October*, despite its many virtues, lacked the unity of his first film; its artistic subjectivity was in many cases not given a proper emotional base, and certain sequences were difficult to understand. The material itself also required another artistic approach. Eisenstein's next film *Old and New*, the episode with the separator, which some film historians regard as one of the two artistic highpoints of the film, was made according to Eisenstein's 'emotive' theory, but the film lacked Eisenstein's own intense emotional feeling behind it. The tense wait — will the separator work or not? — seems rather naive, and the people around the separator are somehow debased in the viewer's estimation.

The influence of 'left' poetics was particularly dramatic on Vsevolod Pudovkin's subsequent work. True, this influence was not immediately felt.

After *Mother*, Pudovkin continued to struggle for innovation in cinema and directed *The End of St. Petersburg*, which told of the destiny of an uneducated, hungry peasant boy who comes to the capital in search of work and travels that difficult path typical for a worker in bourgeois Russia, finally finding his place in the revolutionary struggle. The film offered a broad picture of the revolutionary movement in the depths of the masses. The film was released on the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution.



A year later Pudovkin made one more very fine, courageous film—this time about the struggle of the oppressed colonial peoples against their imperialist overlords. The action of *The Heir to Genghis Khan* takes place in Mongolia. When this film, overcoming all obstacles, was sent abroad it was there re-entitled *Storm Over Asia*.

Tirelessly pursuing his creative search, Pudovkin always tried to make his films comprehensible to the broadest audiences possible, as well as concerning them with the most vital problems in art and life.

In his second film *The End of St. Petersburg*, Pudovkin paid his due to 'left' poetics. Yet in this film and in the one that followed it, *The Heir to Genghis Khan*, realistic traditions dominated, although the artistic method continued to change in accordance with 'left', innovative principles. It was on this point, rather than in the transition from silent cinema to sound—as some critics have suggested—that the seeds were sown that later produced the director's subsequent failures. An obvious decline set in with Pudovkin's next three films: *A Simple Case*, *Deserter*, and *The Happiest Man*. The reason for this did not lie in external circumstances, but in the artist himself who adopted voluntarist principles which, as could only be expected, later proved mistaken and condemned Pudovkin to artistic failure.

'Left' poetics were predominantly illustrative and did not require a deep knowledge of life from the artist. An independent interpretation of life was also not required. When Eisenstein later re-examined his mistaken enthusiasms, he made a firm distinction between all sorts of voluntarist methods in art, which could only be short-lived and sterile, and 'organic' methods based on the 'structure of things', the organic nature of life and thought processes.

An original artistic style was also evident in the twenties in the films of Aleksandr Dovzhenko, who began his film-making career in the Ukraine, in the Odessa Film Studios. Dovzhenko was thirty-two years old when he abandoned his

work as a painter and graphic artist to become a director. His first full-length feature film was *The Diplomatic Pouch* (1927). The film's plot was built around the death of the Soviet courier Teodor Nette, and it glorified international solidarity of the working class.

*The Diplomatic Pouch* featured Dovzhenko acting—his one and only appearance as an actor—the part of a high-spirited stoker on the train on which the Soviet courier is travelling—a small, but memorable role.

With the experience of one full-length film behind him, Dovzhenko was then able to undertake to realise his original plans for a film. In 1927 he made *Zvenigora*, directed against the Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists. The film is highly complex, with an unusual plot and compositional structure and a wealth of artistic invention, but it clearly conveys the idea of the great role that the October Revolution and the friendship of the Ukrainian and Russian peoples played in liberating the Ukraine.

The film was uneven and highly experimental, and not everything in it was entirely comprehensible to the audience. It was criticised for this and its defects were frequently exaggerated by critics who did not perceive the new, individual, vivid qualities that Dovzhenko brought to cinema. But leading Soviet film-makers realised the innovative spirit in this imperfect film.

*Zvenigora* was Dovzhenko's first film shown abroad. In 1928 it was screened at the International Film Exhibition in the Hague, then in Paris. The film was a success and produced favourable comment in the press.

After *Zvenigora*, Dovzhenko filmed *Arsenal* in 1929, a memorable event in cinema history.

*Arsenal* was the major industrial enterprise in pre-revolutionary Kiev. The workers at the plant actively participated in affirming the ideas of the October Revolution in the Ukraine and struggled selflessly against the counter-revolutionary forces. These historical events provided the material for Dovzhenko's film.

As *Zvenigora*, *Arsenal* was directed against Ukrainian counter-revolutionary nationalists, and it served to show the unity of the Ukrainian and Russian working class.

The film stunned its audiences with its unexpected artistic methods and bold use of the screen's expressive means.

*Arsenal* was a great success in Soviet theatres and abroad. It represented a major victory for the Soviet cinema. The grandiose theme of the Revolution was developed by revolutionary artistic means: without a conventional, clearly-expounded plot—the basis of the conventionally entertaining film, without every-day verisimilitude, without precise and logical motivations.

Dovzhenko warned repeatedly against considering real events to be symbolic in his films, or that they are dominated by allegory and symbols to be deciphered by the audience. Dovzhenko does not deal in symbols. He has a deep insight, and perceives life's inner essence. He admitted that when he was directing the film's last sequence, the scene in which the hero is shot by his enemies and he continues to stand uninjured, triumphantly, like a monument, he had within himself the degree of 'artistic naiveté' that is necessary to emotionally perceive the improbable as the real and believe in its life-like quality.

Dovzhenko's next film *Earth* contained the marvellous figure of a young peasant with a great love of life. Vasil is working for agricultural collectivisation. He writes a short article for the newspaper in which he unmaskes the kulaks, the enemies of the collective farm and of all that is new in the Soviet village, which replaces the psychology of private ownership. Feeling himself a prophet of great changes to come, the young tractor driver ploughs up the former boundaries between the farm-lands and does away with the age-old divisions between the peasants. This earns him the fierce hatred of the kulaks, and he is killed by a kulak bullet.

Dovzhenko's films always contain death. His heroes die, but their deaths are not depressing. Dovzhenko's films are to a certain extent optimistic tragedies. His heroes never die in

vain; rather death becomes an affirmation of life and of all that is new in it.

The scene of Vasil's funeral is an apotheosis of life. He is carried past the apple trees weighed down with ripe fruit and the tender boughs of the trees gently caress his bright, young, face. The funeral becomes a cause for celebration and turns into a meeting at which Vasil's comrades speak inspiringly about the struggle for a new life.

*Earth* was the first full-length film about the collectivisation of the village. Dovzhenko's next films were dedicated to problems that were topical at the time.

Dovzhenko considered the most important quality in an artist not to be his ability to entertain or stun by his virtuosity, but his qualities as a citizen and his ability to bear the standard of the future. He continued the tradition of the artist's lofty consciousness of his duty as a citizen, the thread that ran through the entire history of progressive art, a tradition having its origins in folk-singing and wandering minstrels—passionately, inspiringly urging the people to struggle for freedom and justice.

Dovzhenko himself was a very vivid personality, but he realised early on that to be simply unique was not enough to serve the cause of art. How many film-makers have made the tragic mistake—not always immediately obvious—of thinking that it is enough to be skilled and have a style of one's own in cinema, while essentially carrying out other people's conceptions! Dovzhenko was certain that every true artist is also a thinker who actively participates in solving life's most vital problems. He cannot restrict himself to complacently demonstrating his creative personality. He should not neglect to consider his relation to other people, to society, and history. Individualist art avoids this question and pretends that it does not exist, while in socialist realism it is one of the decisive questions. The artist in cinema—whether he be the director, cameraman, or actor—who makes everything hinge on his own personality (and this is typical of film-stars), no

matter how vivid this personality may be, cannot draw attention to himself for long. Art is, after all, a means of cognition and mastering the world, the affirmation of spiritual, moral, and aesthetic values, and integral, monistic—as philosophers say—view of life, without which man will inevitably be alienated from a positive understanding of reality.

And so Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko, and Dziga Vertov brought the bright glow of historical battles for a new life to the screen. They were not alone, however, although they were the best-known. They developed among many other talented film-makers whose number grew with each passing year. The road to realism was also taken by film-makers who had paid their due—sometimes a relatively large one—to various formalist methods and ‘left’ ideas borrowed from pre-revolutionary decadent art. Among those whose evolution was of this type were the FEKS group.

The Factory of the Eccentric Actor (abbreviated as FEKS) was founded by a large group of Leningrad film-makers, among them Grigori Kozintsev, Leonid Trauberg, Sergei Yutkevich, actors Sergei Gerasimov, Oleg Zhakov, Elena Kuzmina, artist Evgeni Eney, cameraman Andrei Moskvin, and others.

The FEKS nickname has gone down in cinema history as linked with the first two of the above names, for the rest were younger and almost none of them were yet directors. Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg sought their path in art among formalist methods at first; their statements of creative principle and practical experiments sacrificed life’s truth and classical realism to striking plot structures and ‘picturesque’ compositions. They glorified circus attractions (The Devil’s Wheel), and tap-dance rhythms. All this was in the spirit of a falsely-innovative tendency that was current in art at that time—futurism, which not only broke down the content, but led to the disintegration of the very form of art, as a result of which its content drawn from life was lost and the cognitive role of art was rejected.

The early FEKS films were heavily influenced by all these errors. It was only later, after all their ultra-formalist experiments, that they filmed Gogol's *The Overcoat*. But the FEKS version departed from the original. The original showed how, through the drama of the little man, his human dignity was affirmed; the FEKS wanted to heighten the critical elements in the story and convey the 'absurd order' of life in tsarist Petersburg. They wrote of their conception of this film: 'a monstrous social injustice' is concealed behind the office's absurd paper-shuffling. The film's directors surrounded the main character, a pathetic bureaucrat, with a whole panorama of monsters—not human being but pigs' snouts: 'the foreigner Ivan Fedorov' with decayed teeth and a bandaged cheek, the indistinct, animal-like face of the landowner, the dissolute, impudent 'important personage'. The film contains dreams, daydreams, and nightmares. The excessive hyperbole and grotesque qualities made the film one-sided and the realistic content of Gogol's story was not understood by the directors who were unable to convey the author's intonation, Gogol's illumination of all that he depicts. Nonetheless, despite all its formalist inclinations, *The Overcoat* was interesting in certain respects. The next films by these young directors showed their turn towards realism.

*The Club of the Big Deed* was a film about the Decembrist uprising, and *New Babylon* was about the Paris Commune; both films showed that Kozintsev and Trauberg were then searching for realistic means by which to deal with the revolutionary theme on the screen. Rejecting formalist trickery, they nonetheless retained—in Kozintsev's words—their 'hatred of slice-of-life naturalism', which stimulated them to 'intensify their expressive means and strive for dynamism'. In following this inclination they were later to create a whole series of important films.

It was also at this time in Leningrad that Friedrich Ermler's talent as a director developed. His very first films showed his special interest in the morals and daily lives of Soviet youth.

Films dealing with young people were fairly common at this time, although they very often treated the subject in a very shallow, one-sided fashion: directors often chose sensational treatments of stories about young people caught up in a criminal milieu. Ermler chose moral and ethical subjects for his entertaining stories about young people. *Katka's Reinette Apples* is a film that superficially seems to draw the viewer into the atmosphere of a day in a large city, with all its specific qualities — but this is only at first glance. The film's real theme is the rebirth of the human qualities of a girl who tears herself away from her declass   surroundings in her search for a new life.

Ermler develops this theme even more emphatically in his *The House in the Snowdrifts*, based on Evgeny Zamyatin's *The Cave*, a story that was ideologically and artistically rather dubious. An elderly musician, who could not adjust to the new life, is slowly dying in an unheated room in a famine-stricken town, together with his sick wife. But the film does not show him dying in hopeless solitude. Together with script-writer Boris Leonidov, actor Fyodor Nikitin, and others, Ermler was able to give this sombre story a different intonation. The film's main character, depressed and seeing no way out of his situation, suddenly discovers a ray of hope in joining in the new life. He agrees to take part in a concert for the Red Army 'for a food packet'. A happy smile slowly spreads across the tormented face of this man who had stolen firewood and not long before sought a way out in suicide — now things are different, now he is needed, by people and the new life.

Ermler remains faithful to his theme in his next film, *The Parisian Cobbler*. In this film he defends Communist morality. At the time the film produced sharp controversy. Both the content and the artistic means used by the director were at issue. In his previous films Ermler showed himself to be a talented director seeking ways to reveal human psychology, but this film made use of straightforward, unequivocal means to defend its thesis. *The Parisian Cobbler* was directed against

the bourgeois philistines who mercilessly badgered a girl in distress, but it also sharply criticises the Communist Youth League members who nearly passed the girl by for their indifference and lack of attention to human needs.

Ermler dealt with vital contemporary problems in his *A Chip of an Empire*, made in the late 1920s. This film reflected the social changes that had taken place in the life of the country during the first decade after the Revolution. The film's main theme was socialist labour. In the centre stands the figure of an ordinary working man, a role played by the same actor who had been in Ermler's preceding films — Fyodor Nikitin. He showed convincingly the destiny of the Petersburg worker Filimonov, who had fought in the First World War, as a result of which he had suffered a concussion and lost his memory. Twelve years pass. Filimonov is cured and joyfully learns what Soviet power has brought the people. The main character's recollections and scenes from the past are interspersed with scenes from the new life. This device made Soviet reality and all that was new in the Soviet Union stand out more clearly, freshly, and intensely. The publicistic tone and methods that were characteristic of Ermler's work were better integrated into this film than had previously been the case.

Yakov Protazanov also actively worked in Soviet cinema in the twenties. As mentioned earlier, Protazanov's pre-revolutionary screen treatments of literary classics were enormously popular with audiences. In the Soviet period Protazanov directed Lev Tolstoy's *Father Sergius*, Chekhov's *Chameleon* and *Anna on the Neck*, Lavrenev's *The Forty-First*, Leonid Andreev's *White Eagle*, and Ostrovsky's *Without a Dowry*. This latter film was perhaps the most successful. But Protazanov's comedies: *The Cutter from Torzhok*, *The Trial about Three Million*, *Don Diego and Pelageya*, *The Feast of St. Iorgen*, *Nasreddin in Bukhara*, and others were also warmly received by audiences.

It was at this time that Protazanov also filmed Alexei Tostoy's famous fantastic novel *Aelita*, on which he worked with



a large team — cameraman Yury Zhelyabuzhsky, and actors Yulia Solntseva, Igor Ilinsky, Nikolai Batalov, and others). The film contains interesting episodes, but as a whole, despite the director's evident professional skill, it was eclectic; the fantastic scenes on Mars were set up in a conventionally modernist manner, while the scenes of ordinary daily life were realistic and had a ring of truth about them.

Protazanov's next film *His Call* was made for the first anniversary of Lenin's death. This film was also not artistically integrated, but it signalled a new and important turn in this director's career.

In the years to follow Protazanov continued to work productively. His screen adaptation of Boris Lavrenev's story *The Forty-First*, which was particularly forceful because of its sharp class conflict, was praised by critics.

Protazanov's skill in working with actors and precise feeling for realistic form in films on various themes and in various genres assured his films of constant popularity with audiences.

The twenties also saw the successful debuts of Sergei Yutkevich, Abram Room, Grigori Roshal, Yuly Raizman, Ivan Kavaleridze, Nikolai Shengelaya, Mikhail Kalatozov, and many other directors.

A member of the FEKS group along with Kozintsev and Trauberg, Yutkevich began working in cinema in 1925; his very first films showed his independent, acute, and precise vision of the contemporary scene. The re-education of a rowdy, the struggle against boredom, the transformation of a bar into a workers' club, the publishing of a satirical wall newspaper — this was the material that made up Yutkevich's *Lace*. The choice of the lace factory as a location was not accidental: the director and cameraman made use of the delicate, refined outlines of lace in their frame-compositions and in the editing structure. The film met with a favourable reception, but the young director interpreted this wrongly. His next film, *Black Sail* (about the lives of young fishermen)

exaggerated the aesthetic importance of visual texture. But his subsequent films in the thirties (*Golden Mountains* and *Counterplan*) treated their subject matter in a realistic vein.

Abram Rohom (1894-1976) began to make a name for himself with his first films in the 1920s. His *Third Meshchanskaya Street* was filmed from a script which he wrote with Victor Shklovsky dealing with male-female relations. Rohom was very deservedly highly praised for his film on an important international theme, *The Ghost That Will Not Return* (from the story by Henri Barbusse, 'Le revenant que ne revient pas', adapted for the screen by Turkin). The film was more dynamic than its literary original. The film treatment of this highly dramatic story made a forceful impression because of its compositional precision, vivid contrasts, and original frame compositions. By showing one day in the prison life of the revolutionary José Real (the action takes place in South America), a prisoner serving a life sentence, and skillfully combining scenes from daily life with the main character's thoughts, visions, and dreams, the film clearly reveals the methods used against the revolutionary movement in capitalist countries and the harsh repressions meted out to the working class and its leaders. The actors performed outstandingly in this film, especially Maxim Shtrauch, who played the detective. Henri Barbusse praised the film highly.

Grigori Roshal directed such interesting films as *The Skotinins*, *His Excellency*, and *The Salamander*. The first of these was a very original screen treatment of Fonvizin's classic comedy *The Minor*. The script-editor was Lunacharsky, who later helped to write the script for *The Salamander*. This film is based on real events in the life of the Austrian biologist Kameron, a materialist who was persecuted by reactionaries. The character in the film is named Professor Zange, and he was memorably played by the German actor Bernhardt Getzke. Professor Zange's experiments on salamanders were a serious contribution to science, but they caused the scholar to be

bitterly persecuted by pseudo-scientists. The film vividly treated the theme of the situation of materialist scientists in capitalist countries. Because of its absorbing plot and well-acted characters the film was very popular with audiences at the time.

Yuly Raizman began his cinematic career as assistant director to Yakov Protazanov. His first independent silent films were *The Circle*, *Penal Servitude*, and *The Earth Thirsts*. He worked closely and meticulously on each film, giving special attention to character development—not only for the main figures, but also the secondary and less important characters.

Many young directors also began their careers in cinema in the 1920s, but only became better known in the following decade. These included Georgi and Sergei Vasiliev, Ivan Pyriev, Mark Donskoy, Vladimir Petrov, Evgeny Ivanov-Barkov, Aleksandr Ivanov, Boris Barnet, and others. Directing and acting skills developed during this period, as did the expressive qualities and individual styles of directing manners. The art of cinematic photography also flourished: the best cameramen of the older generation (Anatoly Golovnya, Daniil Demutsky, Aleksandr Digmelov, and others) drew on the creative traditions of Russian painting. The career of cameraman Andrei Moskvin is very interesting. Having first worked with the FEKS group, he strove for a highly distinctive, eccentric cinematographic form, showing virtuoso skill in photographing movement, unusual perspectives, and sharp lighting contrasts. As time passed he enriched his work with a lyrical sense and warm colour effects. The expressiveness, pictorial qualities, and compositional wealth of many films in the twenties were also due to the talented scenic designers who worked on these films (Alexei Utkin, Vladimir Egorov, Sergei Kozlovsky, Iosif Shpinel, Nikolai Suvorov, Evgeny Eney, and others).

From the very beginning, Soviet cinema showed itself to be a multinational art. We have already mentioned the

enormous contribution made by Ukrainian director-writer Aleksandr Dovzhenko, whose work organically fused national traits with the socialist internationalism of Soviet art. These traits were also typical of films by other noted directors in the 1920s: Ivan Kavaleridze, Ivan Peristiani, Amo Bek-Nazarov, Nikolai Shengelaya, Mikhail Kalatozov, and many others. They were all internationalists and Soviet patriots, and this was reflected in their work.

Nikolai Shengelaya (1903-1943) became well-known after his film *Eliso* (from a story by Georgian writer A. Kazbegi), which dealt with the Georgian people's past. The script expanded the literary original and made the cruelty of the tsarist colonial policies the main theme. The film was unusually emotional, a deliberately social interpretation strongly contrasting with traditionally 'exotic' treatments of Georgian themes. It was also at the Georgian Film Studio in Tbilisi that Mikhail Kalatozov (1903-1973) gave proof of his talent. His documental film *Salt for Svanetia*, brilliantly showing the life of the mountain people of Svanetia, isolated from the world by the impassable peaks of the Caucasus, met with high praise from critics. The end of the film shows how the new Soviet socio-economic order brings the region's age-old isolation to an end.

Ivan Peristiani, formerly an actor in silent films and an experienced stage actor, became one of the pioneers of Georgian cinema in the late 1920s. Apart from the films by Peristiani we have already listed, *Arsen* and *Red Devils*, we should also mention his *Three Lives* which stirred up broad discussions and was actively supported by Lunacharsky when it came under attack by 'left' critics. Peristiani was among those Soviet directors who always consistently maintained realistic traditions in art, emphasising the importance of studying life itself, and rejecting the illustrative or imitative depiction of life.

Many interesting films were made in Georgia in the 1920s, particularly by Peristiani. His career in film was a long one — extending over 75 years.

The directing careers of Amo Bek-Nazarov and Ivan Kavaleridze, to mention only two names, also began in the twenties (both were noted film-makers at the time) and lasted a long time. Apart from film-making, Kavaleridze was also known as a talented sculptor. His early films in particular show his knowledge of sculpture, which he tried to adapt to cinematic means.

The Odessa Film Studio at which Kavaleridze worked was created out of the ruins of private pre-revolutionary studios; at the very beginning of its existence it became a lively southern crossroads at which novices met older film-makers, writers, and actors, some of whom were in Odessa temporarily, while others came and stayed a long time. Among them were Vladimir Mayakovsky, script-writer Victor Shklovsky, actors Maria Zankovetskaya, Amvrosy Buchma, Natalya Uzhvy, Gnat Yura, and Vladimir Gardin, Ukrainian writers Mikola Bazhan, Yuri Yankovsky, and Aleksandr Korneichuk, film and stage directors Kavaleridze, Dovzhenko, Gardin, Peristiani, Roshal, and Tasin. Who didn't work at the Odessa Studio in those years?

*Night Cabman*, a film made by Georgy Tasin at the Odessa Studio, featured Ukrainian stage and film actor Amvrosy Buchma in the main role. This little man, the night cabman Gordey Yaroshchuk, became one of the most memorable characters in the early Soviet cinema. His tragic destiny, his encounter with the merciless laws of social struggle might seem only a minor episode. But Buchma was so memorable in disclosing his character's realisation that his daughter is right in siding with the people that the film's pathos rose to the heights of tragedy.

Amo Bek-Nazarov (1892-1965), also a former actor in pre-revolutionary cinema, made several films in the twenties of which *Namus* stands out. In Soviet cinema history it is regarded as the beginning of serious Armenian cinema. Early Soviet films often borrowed foreign films' habit of treating Eastern themes superficially, 'exotically'. Bek-Nazarov's *Namus* showed

the East in an entirely new manner. The film's literary source was a work by Shirvanzade. Its actors came from the Armenian theatre: Ovanes Abelyan, Grachiya Nersesyan, Avet Avetisyan, and others. With their help, the director recreated a realistic, satirical picture of the old life in a small eastern town with its sharp contrasts. The film was very successful not only in Armenia, but also throughout the Soviet Union, above all in Moscow, and it was also successfully released in America, France, Turkey, Iran, and a number of South American countries.

The 1920s then was a rich and productive period in Soviet cinema history. In Moscow, Leningrad, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Georgia, and Armenia film-makers were energetically working, studying, searching, experimenting, struggling against everything old and out-moded, reworking all the best the past had to offer, and rejecting all types of 'left' extremes, crudely sociological conceptions, simplifications, and primitive interpretations of artistic phenomena. A new artistic method took shape in cinema that was later to be called socialist realism. Leading film-makers learned to interpret life in its revolutionary development, in term of its deeply historical laws and central conflicts. The grounds on which cinema grew was the new reality which required artistic cognition and reflection from the viewpoint of socialist ideology. Young cinema also treated the past in this same ideological vein, above all revolutionary struggle in the past. The cinema looked for and found new heroes, and showed their characters and fates as social and historical phenomena.

The art of the Soviet socialist cinema emerged from this broad and active creative process and became a part of world cinema.

The 'silent period' in Soviet cinema ended in the late 1920s and sound, the spoken word, came to the screen.

# **SOCIALIST REALISM IN THE CINEMA (THE THIRTIES)**

After the Civil War the Soviet people, guided by the Communist Party, began the enormous task of reconstructing and developing their country's economy on socialist principles—industry, agriculture, and transport. The main task in the thirties was the drive for industrialisation, above all the development of heavy industry. Industrialisation created the base for the collectivisation of agriculture.

Great new tasks now faced Soviet art, including cinema; among these tasks one of the most important was to show contemporary man performing concrete tasks, as a part of history, depict the people's life in individual figures.

The thirties was a period in which socialist realism, the method of all Soviet literature and art, affirmed itself; the basis for socialist realism in cinema was laid by the best films from the preceding decade.

The progress of cinematic technology played an enormous role in the further development of the cinema. Films now acquired sound, the spoken word. The solution of technical problems in sound recording and sound reproduction on tape, and the synchronisation of sound and image on the screen were linked in the Soviet Union to the successes of socialist industrialisation. Pavel Tager and Aleksandr Shorin, inventors of the Soviet system for making sound films, produced and demonstrated the results of their work almost simultaneously with similar work in the United States and Germany. This occurred at the very end of the twenties and so therefore sound films predominated in the decade to follow. Assimilation of this powerful new expressive means required that the cinema industry be technologically re-equipped. Certain creative difficulties arose, as did differences of opinion among film-makers.

In the late 1920s Sergei Eisenstein, Vsevolod Pudovkin,

and Grigori Aleksandrov expounded their views on the future development of sound films in a highly original article, 'The Future of the Sound Film' (*Soviet Screen*, 1928, No. 32). They stated that they were unequivocally on the side of the sound-film, but they were not entirely consistent in their opinions. They acknowledged that 'sound ... will undoubtedly bring new and powerful means for the expression and solution of highly complex tasks that were impossible to deal with by the imperfect methods of a cinema operating only in terms of visual images'. But they also expressed their regret that with the arrival of sound, montage would become less important. They opposed the synchronic use of sound to its 'contrapunctal' use. Synchronisation, they believed, would turn films into 'a photographic reproduction of theatrical presentations'. This fear, which had some basis—shown by the practice of world cinema—was nevertheless founded on a somewhat exaggerated, one-sided view of montage derived from these directors' personal practice in silent films. In their films they had tried to creatively 'represent reality' by means of the broad use of montage methods. Now, fearing the opposition of synchronic sound-on-film to montage, the authors did not formulate their attitude to the sound-film entirely correctly. This led to a misunderstanding of their positions, and produced polemics and criticism directed against them.

Film critics later observed that, although this interesting document did not formulate the question quite adequately, still it contained a serious prophesy of the tangible ways in which cinema's expressive means could be expanded through music, noises, and words.

Theoretical disputes, of course, could not halt the development of the sound-film; as soon as new cinematic technology made it possible in a practical sense, the first sound-films appeared. The very first were documental films: *Plan for Great Works* by Abram Rohom, *Olympic of the Arts* by Vladimir Erofeev, and *Symphony of the Donbass* by Dziga Vertov. Fictional films soon followed.



New artistic means and technology created further conditions for the fuller application of the principles of artistic realism in cinema. The possibilities for typification became greater and new cinematic dramatic forms arose that were to influence the entire system of film imagery and all of its artistic components. This was already clear in films made during the very first stage of the Soviet sound-film.

First of all, this applied to the appearance and mastering of various practical methods of introducing sound. Abram Rohom made his *Plan for Great Works* through editing material from other (silent) films: *Lenin's Funeral*, *The Volkhov Construction Site*, *Oil*, *The Eleventh*, *The Great Road*, and others. 'Of course,' he wrote at the time, 'we couldn't even begin to think of on-site sound recording ... all the sounds we needed were artificially reproduced before the microphone in the studio' (from the newspaper *Kino*, January 11, 1930). Most directors used this method at the beginning—adding sound to their films in a studio with thick sound-proofed walls.

But Dziga Vertov, a passionate adherent to documental qualities in cinema, did not accept such a state of affairs. His first sound-film, *Symphony of the Donbass* used another method of sound recording: his crew took recording equipment with them out onto the streets, into the mine shafts, and into the factories. It is difficult to speak of the aesthetic virtues of this system, but it played a certain role. The naturalistic, artistically unrefined reproduction of speech and sound in this and similarly made films lowered their aesthetic qualities, and this was a lesson for the future.

The first fictional sound-films using the methods of realistic sound recording were *Road to Life*, followed by *Golden Mountains* and *Counterplan*.

Nikolai Ekk, a recent arrival in cinema after professional training and a short stint as a director and actor in Meyerhold's theatre, entered cinema history with his first full-length film, the sound-film *Road to Life*. The film dealt with one of the most heavy consequences of war and destruction—homeless

children and the struggle to overcome this problem. Ekk's film used sound in various ways: human speech, including vivid street jargon, the homeless children's whistling and songs. The music composed by Ya. Stoller, especially Mustafa's song, added greatly to the film's success, which was enormous both in the Soviet Union and abroad. *Road to Life* was selected as one of the best films at the First International Venice Film Festival in 1932. However, many critics reproached the director for supposedly showing the children's condition as less of a dangerous social problem than as a romantic way of life. It would be relevant to remember that noted Soviet educationalist Anton Makarenko, one of the most active leaders of the struggle against this problem, acknowledged the enormous importance of *Road to Life*, for 'despite the fact that it somewhat romanticises homeless children, it is truly humane, passionate, and shows faith in man'.

The humanism of the Soviet system was vividly shown in the figure of the head of the labour commune, Sergeev, memorably acted by Nikolai Batalov. This concerned and sensitive educator had a profound understanding of the abandoned, hardened adolescents in his care. Batalov stressed his character's love of life and Communist conviction. Sergeev selflessly worked where the Party and Soviet government had placed him. His distinctive feature was his profound feeling of responsibility for the work he had been given, for the young generation. The film's theme was not treated in an edifying manner, as was the case of many films at this period, but rather with great artistic conviction.

Then directors Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg made their film *Alone*. It is particularly interesting in that it was first filmed as a silent film and sound was only added later. In other films this practice had not been very successful, but Kozintsev and Trauberg's film gained by it. Dmitry Shostakovich's distinctive, memorable music — 'Budyonny's March', and the songs 'How Wonderful Life Will Be' and 'Cradle Song' — was a profound and active element in the film's dramatic structure.

The silent-film era was coming to an end when Kozintsev and Trauberg wrote this script about a girl who graduates from a teacher training college and dreams of staying in her native Leningrad, of settling down with her loved one in a cosy family nest. But she is unexpectedly assigned to work in a remote village in the Altai Mountains. There she tries to cut herself off from the life around her, which she does not understand, and occupy herself exclusively with the affairs of the school. But once again life runs counter to her intentions. A struggle is taking place between the cattle-farmers in the village: the poor people are asserting themselves against the local kulaks, an echo of the class struggle taking place throughout the country. The young schoolmistress becomes involved in the village interests, which become a part of her very being. The directors' style had been very different before, but now they began to look at life from a new angle. Their romantic inclination for spectacular effects gradually gave way to simple, reserved expressiveness. The film's success was greatly enhanced by the interesting, but strictly realistic acting of Sergei Gerasimov and Maria Babanova. Critics faulted Elena Kuzmina, at that time a beginning actress entrusted with the main role, for some inconsistency in her acting, but the film was nevertheless an outstanding event in cinema in the early 1930s, when the search was underway for a new hero.

Soviet cinema was developing in depth and breadth at this time. The thematic range was expanding and becoming richer: films were being made about Soviet reality, historical-revolutionary themes, the struggle of the working class abroad, and literary classics were being adapted for the screen. The famous resolution of the Party Central Committee on April 23, 1932, 'On the Restructuring of Literary and Art Organisations', reflected the changes taking place in Soviet literature and art, the basic indicator of which was the growth of political consciousness among broad sections of the artistic intelligentsia and their active participation in the building of socialism. Creative organisations were restructured and

socialist realism—the new artistic method conditioned by the new social and economic structure of Soviet life—took root ever more firmly in literature and art. The First Congress of the Soviet Writers' Union took place in 1934, and the speech made by Maxim Gorky at this congress was warmly approved by film people as well, helping them scale new artistic heights.

*Road to Life*, *Alone*, and several other films made in the early 1930s demonstrated that Soviet cinema had entered a period of active ideological and artistic searchings, without rejecting the best of what had been attained in previous periods, but decisively liberating itself from a simplified approach to life. In Eisenstein's words, film-makers now began 'to learn to make three-dimensional, rounded figures, leaving behind the two-dimensional, flat images that translated slogan into plot "literally", without any finesse'.

'Socialist realism,' said Gorky at the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers, 'proclaims that life is action, creativity, whose aim is the unfettered development of man's most valuable individual abilities for his triumph over the forces of Nature, for his health and longevity, for the great joy of living on earth, which he, in conformity with the constant growth of his requirements, wishes to cultivate as a magnificent habitation of a mankind united in one family.'

The Writers' Congress helped to actively realise Lenin's behest to transform literature and art into an active force for the people's struggle for socialism. The years immediately ahead furnished many memorable examples of the Party's fruitful influence on the affirmation of socialist realism in cinema.

The development of Soviet cinema was not a triumphant march from one masterpiece to another. There were weak, mediocre films made by less capable people, too. These films are very rightly forgotten today. But there were also failures resulting from mistakes of principle made by film-makers

searching out new paths, and these failures are worth mentioning.

To convey the new feelings and thoughts of the revolutionary people on the screen was impossible using only those expressive means that already existed. Some film-makers strove intently to expand the range of film language, and studied problems that were often highly technical. As a result of these searchings and experiments means were developed capable of transmitting the director's thoughts and emotions more precisely and affecting the viewers more actively, sometimes forcibly. Film language was enriched by various methods of montage, rhythmic structure, associations, metaphors, comparisons, and symbols.

These methods were highly expressive. Certain film-makers began to make films that acted on the audience not so much by their truthful depiction of life on the screen as by their deft use of the new methods, all sorts of 'effective constructions', the so-called 'montage of attractions'. As a consequence of this it was stated that art's main purpose was not the cognition of life through artistic means, but above all to affect the audience. Art's two functions were thus unjustifiably separated from each other. At the end of the silent era, films began to appear that lacked any indication of the film-maker's position or feelings, that did not contain realistic depictions of life or full-blooded characterisations.

The sound-film *Counterplan* (directed by Sergei Yutkevich and Friedrich Ermler), which was released in 1932, can be regarded as a sharp and convincing rebuttal to such films. This work was a programme for the new, so-called 'prosaic' tendency in cinema. Life, rather than artificial methods of acting on the audience's sensibilities, was now solidly reaffirmed on the screen. *Counterplan* contained living images of people, the atmosphere of the time, and the enthusiasm of the first five-year plans.

This film had a firm documental basis. The directors joined the workers at a Leningrad metal factory, lived shoulder

to shoulder with the collective, taking part in the socialist emulation programme to fulfil the counterplan—a more demanding production plan advanced by the workers themselves (thus the title of the film). This emulation programme disclosed the people's best civil and human characteristics. The factory became a family home of sorts where good comradeship and mutual help reign, and criticism is permeated with a sense of well-meaning friendship. The atmosphere of this new socialist life was conveyed in a highly convincing, impressive manner; it is gripping even now upon re-viewing and hearing Shostakovich's 'Song about the Counterplan', the film's musical theme. The film crew lived in this atmosphere, joined in the factory emulation drive, and brought out their film for the fifteenth anniversary of the October Revolution in record time: three months in all.

The emulation drive is shown as a typical feature of the new Soviet way of life in the film. Not fierce, unprincipled competition in which anything goes, but comradely assistance between workers in which each individual gains by the others' successes.

Silent films from the preceding period restricted the artist too much when he wanted to give detailed, realistic psychological portrayal of people. This only became fully possible with the introduction of sound and the spoken word. The artistic focus of films now became the human images created by actors.

*Counterplan* contained a whole pleiad of splendid actors. The experienced worker Semyon Babchenko as played by the noted actor of the older generation, Vladimir Gardin, was a universally acknowledged *tour de force*. Boris Tenin's portrayal of Vasya, the young Party worker and secretary of the factory Party organisation, also won notice. The other roles were also interpreted in a fresh manner: A. Abrikosov as Vasya's friend Pavel, T. Guretskaya as Katya, Pavel's wife, and others.

The characters in *Counterplan* are not only life-like, they are also original, major figures. The directors noticed and conveyed

to the audience a very important, typical trait of Soviet reality: everyone is convinced that the new life is just beginning, that it is still ahead, but near at hand, not in the distant future, and everyone sees it as his moral duty to contribute to the common cause. This consciousness makes people free and raises them to a spiritual height from which everything in the distance is clearly seen.

Reality rushed forward onto the screen in an unending flow in *Counterplan*. We hear it in the sounding of the factory whistles, in the noise of the churning turbines, in the ringing of the tram. It is in the rich, flexible, expressive intonations and their nuances which convey so much. And this is despite the fact that the sound recording system was still imperfect and the actors had to speak more slowly than in life, more clearly than usual.

Soviet cinema in the early thirties was characterised by its intense interest in contemporary themes, in the fundamentally new social processes that were occurring in the country. Film-makers chose large-scale, important, advanced themes that touched on the very basis of the people's lives. It was for this reason that many films were extraordinarily popular with broad audiences of the people. The cinema became the most popular art for millions of people.

The early sound period in Soviet cinema was marked by such films on contemporary themes as (apart from *Counterplan*) Dovzhenko's *Ivan*, Aleksandr Macheret's *Men and Jobs*, Yuly Raizman's *The Earth Thirsts*, S. Palavandashvili's *Zhuzhuna's Dowry* and Igor Savchenko's *Harmonica*.

Treating contemporary themes gave film-makers the chance to make their methods for realistically portraying life more profound, to enrich it with psychological analysis capable of conveying all the subtleties of their heroes' inner being, the nuances of their thoughts and feelings.

Later, in the latter half of the 1930s these achievements were used to further develop the historical-revolutionary theme as well.

Dovzhenko's *Ivan* was filmed in Kiev when one of the first projects in the country's socialist industrialisation — the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station — was under way. This construction was taking place where the legendary Zaporozhye Cossacks had once lived. This gave Dovzhenko food for thought, and poetic images began to form in his imagination suggested by the contrast between the modern hydroelectric construction and the ancient road 'from the Varangians down to the Greeks', on which a dam was now being erected. The Dnieper project inspired more than one book, painting, and film.

People are marching from the village to work on the site. Among them are Ivan's father and Ivan. A hundred people, predominantly young people, young men. Old men and girls with flags furled on their shoulders look after them for a long time. They walk along a road leading through a field, a long road that stretches off into the distant horizon. They slowly pass by telegraph poles, singing songs as they go. Long, typically Dovzhenkoan shots give viewers time to bring their thoughts into unison with the men who are leaving. The sky is far above their heads — again a typical frame-composition for Dovzhenko — a spacious sky.

There are a great many such incredibly lengthy shots in Dovzhenko's films, illustrating what Pudovkin meant in speaking of 'the time warp'. At dramatic, particularly tense moments psychological time is not equal to ordinary time, it expands and is perceived as if under a microscope lens.

It is growing dark in the dormitory room where Ivan has been placed. Night is descending on the Dnieper. The enormous, endless night-time landscape of the construction site forms one whole with the music that accompanies this magnificent spectacle.

'Ivan stands by the window. Behind him there are lights and sounds.' The script briefly notes these facts, but the film presents them as an entire industrial symphony surging with emotion.

'The sum of these sounds,' Dovzhenko wrote in his script



for *Ivan*, 'creates a distinctive construction melody typical of the evening. The screech of metal sometimes breaks into this melody. Or the high-pitched whistles of engines.' The peasant boy Ivan looks at the construction site's night-time panorama. Everything is unfamiliar, as if he had been transported to another planet.

This film was received rapturously at the 1934 Venice International Festival with special attention accorded cameraman Daniil Demutsky. Interesting music was also written for the film by composer Yuri Meitus. The film's psychological elements were presented very precisely and deeply felt. Films from this period created a particular aesthetic for the industrial landscape. The pictures of this gigantic construction site which the peasant boy is seeing for the first time serve to transmit his thoughts and emotions.

Dovzhenko raised many important problems in *Ivan*—the arrival on one of the first major construction projects of a young peasant who is immediately caught up by the grandeur of collective industrial labour. The beginnings of socialist emulation.

But a real giant step forward in Soviet cinema—not in the technical, but artistic sense—took place in 1934 with the release of *Chapaev*, directed by 'the Vassilyev brothers' (Sergei and Georgy Vassilyev, who shared the same family name, but were unrelated to each other). The film's main character was the Civil War hero, people's commander Vassily Chapaev.

This outstanding film took shape in a very natural—we might even say, easy—manner. The directors later recalled, 'When choosing our theme, we proceeded from what seemed to us an obvious assumption that a revolutionary artist was duty-bound to work with the fundamental themes of contemporary life. We tried to find what was really fundamental and central to the time. We picked out the role of the Party because everything that is today is a result of the Party's wise and capable leadership. This theme excited and inspired us. But how could it be dealt with, in what form?

‘Since we had both participated in the Civil War and knew material from the war very well, we decided to deal with this subject.’

The directors chose the novel written by Dmitry Furmanov, the former commissar in Chapaev’s division. It would have been difficult to make a more fortuitous choice; here they were dealing with a real man whose character was described with documental accuracy and consistency by a writer who knew him well. Memoirs and stories by other comrades-in-arms and friends of Chapaev were also used.

Dmitry Furmanov noted an extremely important trait in Chapaev’s character. That was his national, popular quality — one of the fundamental categories of the method of socialist realism. Furmanov wrote of Chapaev: ‘Many men were braver and cleverer than he, and more talented military leaders, more politically aware, but their names are forgotten, while Chapaev will live long in the people’s memories, for he was a true son of this milieu, an amazing fusion of qualities that other commanders possessed separately.’

Chapaev as acted by Boris Babochkin was a living man, a unique and memorable individual. A carpenter from the Urals, then a non-commissioned officer in the tsarist army, during the Civil War Chapaev became an outstanding military commander whose skill and talent were grudgingly acknowledged by even his enemies.

A memorable figure, but not an idealised one. Chapaev was a man of little learning, and he was naive in many ways; he did not always get the better of his emotions; a certain unruly spontaneity was a strong point of his character.

The entire film was made this way. There was no deliberate illustrativeness in depicting either side in the Civil War.

The White Guard commander Borozdin was not portrayed as a monster, nor was the officers’ regiment a collection of cowards and marauders. These men were not without courage and mental capacity. At the human level they were intelligent and honest people, but they made the fatal mistake of failing

to understand that history proceeds according to its own laws and any attempt to hold it back is futile.

This film makes no concessions to the cliché depictions that had characterised so many films in the 1920s. During the Civil War Lenin and the Party had repeatedly warned the people and the army that they were fighting a well-trained, powerful enemy. Yet films before *Chapaev* usually portrayed the enemy in a very simplified fashion. In this film, Chapaev's forces faced capable White Guard divisions unified by a firm class sense.

The 'psychological attack' episode shows a solid unit of officers from the old army, members of the exploiting classes with a hatred of the revolution and revolutionary people. They march toward Chapaev's division with a parade-ground step. There is something terrifying and inexorable about their columns. A drum beats incessantly, heightening the tension. The black rows of officers march on like automatons. When one of them falls, the others close ranks and continue their forward march without so much as a shudder. But Chapaev's men do not give in to this 'psychological attack', for they have been schooled in ideological struggle along with their commander, and this training has not been in vain.

French film historian George Sadoul wrote in his *Histoire du cinema* that on the eve of the 'large-scale psychological attack' hanging over Europe, this episode from *Chapaev* showed the danger concealed in *The Nuremburg Parades* (a nazi film), and contrasted conscious man to the man-machine. The film's heroes were an example to many European partisans during the Second World War.

In our time, too, peoples engaged in wars of national liberation against colonialism and imperialism throughout the world see *Chapaev* as a condensation of the Soviet historical experience.

The potato scene in which Chapaev tests his comrades' knowledge is also very important. Chapaev is irritated by their answers. According to their clichéd, superficial ideas about

the art of war, the commander should always be out in front. But what if the situation demands that he should be somewhere to the side or behind the troops? Chapaev teaches them to reason in a mature, independent, flexible way, disregarding clichés.

This 'test' is relevant not only to war, but to life in general. It is relevant to art, too, where false dogmas and clichés abounded before the Vassilyevs and, unfortunately, after them. *Chapaev* attracted audiences because it was life-like and mature from beginning to end, never slipping into the rut of accepted canons.

The innovative elements in *Chapaev* were valued by the viewers, above all. Evidently the times required such a film. Neither before or after *Chapaev* has there been another film in cinema history that was so enthusiastically welcomed by the whole people.

Audiences liked everything in the film: the hero and the directors' tone as they told the story of Chapaev as it had really happened, without avoiding or smoothing out rough spots, without adapting the material for the audiences for fear that they might not understand something or that they would miss certain nuances. Audiences repaid the directors for their trust with extraordinary enthusiasm.

*Chapaev* was a film about the birth of the Soviet Army, an army of working people, an army with new ideas, tasks, and ideals.

Actor Boris Babochkin described Chapaev as the direct descendant of Stepan Razin, Emelyan Pugachov, and Ivan Bolotnikov. This historical relay was handed down over the centuries and came to an end one night in September, 1919. It fell to the lot of Vassily Chapaev to end this line in Russian history and open a new page in it by becoming one of the first heroes of the proletarian revolution, a Bolshevik and Leninist. The new army was taking shape in the struggle between revolutionary consciousness and lofty proletarian morality, on the one hand, and unruly elemental forces, a manifestation

of unstable petty-bourgeois psychology, on the other hand.

Made without the mobile movie camera that is taken for granted in today's films, without modern sound recording, and without many developments and discoveries that have enriched modern cinema aesthetics, *Chapaev* has proved to be a truly immortal film. It is topical even today with its sharp criticism of unruly spontaneity and disregard for discipline, against which the Party representative, Commissar Klychkov, struggles so consistently.

*Chapaev* produced a strong public response. The newspaper *Pravda* dedicated a front-page article to it entitled '*Chapaev* Will Be Seen by the Whole Country'. The film represented a major qualitative advance in Soviet cinema, a pinnacle of its ideological and artistic achievements, and had an enormous influence on the further development of cinema art.

*Chapaev* consolidated the achievements of socialist realism in cinema. There was now no doubt that the true path had been found. The latter half of the thirties also gave Soviet cinema many outstanding films.

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The addition of the spoken word to film coincided with the beginning of the broad adoption of realistic tendencies in art. 'Left' concepts had continued to have a certain influence on cinema throughout the 1920s; these concepts derived from Proletcult's well-known platform, which Lenin had appraised fully and profoundly, noting the bourgeois side to their rejection of our artistic heritage. Lenin showed the groundlessness of Proletcult's claims that it was creating a special 'proletarian' art, isolated from the artistic achievements of preceding periods.

The practical activity of those who held such 'left', cheaply sociological ideas, typical of the Proletcult, significantly hindered the development of all forms of Soviet art, including the cinema. The resolution of the Party Central Committee

passed on April 23, '1932, 'On the Restructuring of Literary and Art Organisations', made it possible for the 'leftist' formulations of LEF ('Left Front'), RAPP (the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers), and other organisations to be overcome in literary criticism and creative practice. Artists now began to actively turn to our artistic heritage and draw on the productive realistic traditions of our national literature, theatre, and painting.

Screen adaptations of literary and theatrical classics now acquired an important place in the cinema repertoire and in studio plans. Turning to the best achievements of the past became a means of mastering realistic principles in art for film-makers.

A major event in screen adaptations in the 1930s was Vladimir Gardin's film of *Judas Golovliov*, based on Saltykov-Shchedrin's *The Golovliovs* (Gardin also acted the main role of the predatory hypocrite, the serf-owning landowner).

Another interesting film, made in 1934, was a silent version of Guy de Maupassant's well-known story *Boule de Suif*, directed by Mikhail Romm (then making his debut as a director), who strengthened the biting satire of the literary original.

Amo Bek-Nazarov directed the comedy *Pepo*, based on the Armenian literary classics by Sundukyan which presented a vivid picture of Armenian life in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Film-makers in the thirties drew freely on the writings of Chekhov (*The Bear*, *The Man in the Case*, *Surgery*, *The Mask*, *The Burbot*, etc.) and Ostrovsky (*Without Dowry*, an interesting treatment by Yakov Protazanov, and other works).

The film of Ostrovsky's *Thunderstorm* directed by Vladimir Petrov was praised by critics as an example of creatively drawing on our artistic heritage. Today this appraisal seems rather one-sided. The film has many virtues, among them the performance of that noted actress Alla Tarasova as Katerina, the central character. But nearly all the other roles, although they were also played by well-known stage actors, seem today

to be over-acted, as if they were aiming for grotesque satire in the manner of Saltykov-Shchedrin, especially his 'A History of One Town'. The director was not able to overcome, indeed did not attempt to overcome, certain excesses in the Moscow Art Theatre's contemporary stage presentation of this play. Grotesque elements dominated the interpretation of many roles in this production. For instance, Katerina's chief antagonist, her powerful and despotic mother-in-law, the merchant's wife Marfa Kabanova, who is called 'a wild boar' behind her back (a pun on her name in Russian — *Trans.*), was made to physically resemble her nickname. However, Shchedrin's satirical principles are not suitable for Ostrovsky's plays: the latter's method is very different, and his satire, which can be very sharp and biting, nonetheless always remains within the bounds of psychological veracity and daily reality.

A certain inertia carried on from the preceding generation continued to be felt in the cinema's attitude towards the classics in the first decades of the thirties: characters on the screen were polarised in an exaggerated manner, contrasts were heightened, and negative phenomena were made grotesque, although all this was less and less justified because events and characters depicted in the films were increasingly a part of the past, and exaggerated satire on them was not always justified. The contemporary, topical aspect of the work being adapted for the screen was usually missing altogether. Certain vulgar sociological concepts, characteristic of the school of thought headed by then-influential historian M. Pokrovsky played their part in such interpretations. A major factor in overcoming these concepts was the 'Resolution of the Council of Peoples' Commissars of the Soviet Union and All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) of May 16, 1934 on the Teaching of Civil History in Soviet Schools', in which such ideas were subjected to criticism. The overcoming of crude sociological concepts had a beneficial influence on many areas of culture and art. Films developed a markedly different attitude toward screen adaptations of the classics.

Important events in this area were screen adaptations of Gorky's works, especially his autobiographical trilogy, *Childhood*, *Among the People*, and *My Universities*. These last three films, directed by Mark Donskoy, became famous the world over. They present life in pre-revolutionary Russia with a broad, epic sweep, a life that was filled with social tension. The contrasts between riches and poverty, good and evil, and life's disharmony as perceived by a boy who has lost his parents, then by him as a teenager and young man, are presented sharply, often with philosophical tragic depth. Yet in this large gallery of characters that Alyosha Peshkov meets early in his difficult life, highly original figures portrayed as very precisely defined individuals, there is also a great deal that is good and comforting. Actress Varvara Massalitinova, who had played the boar-like mother-in-law in *Thunderstorm* several years earlier, created the vivid figure of Granny Akulina, a woman of unfailing spiritual strength, with a love of life and poetic sense, despite all her hard experience in life.

More of Gorky's works were also brought to the screen in the thirties: *Enemies* (directed by Aleksandr Ivanovsky) and *The Artamonovs* (directed by Grigori Roshal). The attention given to Gorky's writings played an extremely important role in the development of Soviet art and the establishment of socialist realism.

Even in the pre-revolutionary period, progressive artists, publicists, and public figures had regarded Gorky's work as vivid and fundamentally innovative, a step forward in the development of literature. Whatever their outstanding ideological and artistic achievements, most of Gorky's predecessors and contemporaries were to a large extent limited in their creative work within the framework of critical realism, for reasons that were both objective and subjective in character; it was not possible for them, or often they simply were not able to focus their artistic interests and passions on the depiction of life's positive elements, which are always present in any period of history. Chernyshevsky was one of the first forebears



of this new realism in Russian literature with his novel *What Is To Be Done?*, which earned Lenin's high praise. The whole of Gorky's activity as a writer of fiction, publicist, and public figure helped to affirm this trend in new historical conditions.

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With the arrival of sound in Soviet cinema, an artistic trend moved into the foreground that was termed 'prosaic' or 'psychological' because of its passion for reproducing life in its concrete forms and details. This new trend was characterised by its close attention to man's inner world.

One of this trend's most consistent adherents was script-writer and director Sergei Gerasimov. The theme with which he began his directing career was that of young people just beginning to forge an independent life for themselves, as prompted by their hearts and consciences.

Six young men and a girl spend a winter in the Far North, cut off from the world by thousands of kilometres of empty, snow-bound land. Their lives are difficult as they struggle daily against the severe climate. What brought these young people to this place? The wish to begin their path in life courageously, worthily, and in an interesting manner. No one assigned them to go there, they competed for the right to spend a year in the Arctic. The introductory titles to the film inform us: 'In May 193... Young Communist League member Ilya Letnikov published a letter proposing to organise a group of young Communists that would spend the winter in the Bay of Joy. Over four hundred young people expressed their wish to participate. A commission chose six of them...'

The film *The Bold Seven* (1936) was based on real facts. The script was written in constant consultation with Arctic experts. Gerasimov's film showed the fondness for documental style, faithfulness to everyday life, and psychological veracity that were later to be this director's hallmark.

The film's actors — Nikolai Bogolyubov, Tamara Makarova,

Pyotr Aleinikov, Ilya Novoseltsev, and Oleg Zhakov—were chosen for their sincerity and ability to always chart a strict course according to their inner sense of truth and sincerity.

Gerasimov himself never resorted to directorial tricks, or chose sensational dramatic structures. *The Bold Seven* was a chronicle of daily life during this Arctic winter. Each member of the group had his own job: either as a meteorologist, cook, chauffeur, pilot, doctor, leader of the expedition, or radio operator. Nature is not always kind to people—any little thing could become fatal. Their aero-sleigh breaks down, and they set off on a dog-sled to hunt for tin deposits, but on route they are overtaken by a blizzard. The events are dramatic, but there is no trace of sensation or the exotic in them. The film attracted audiences for other reasons: the main characters' enthusiasm, the romantic feeling that goes with youth, and their striving towards the future. There is no conflict between people, and the film's mainspring lies not in contradiction, but in the characters' spiritual unity, the harmony of a collective when each member becomes a better person.

In the spring the icefloes melted and a ship arrived to relieve the group. And so they bid an emotional farewell to their winter expedition, and something very important can be sensed in the sadness that overcomes them. Two remain behind: Ilya Letnikov, the expedition leader, and Zhenya Okhri-menko, the doctor and now Ilya's wife. Ilya dreams of planting gardens in the polar regions—for man must beautify the earth and make the whole world a fine and wonderful place. He has already fallen in love with the Arctic, for it was here that those feelings that are to remain his guiding light in life were first born.

Gerasimov's next film *Komsomolsk* (1938) was no less documentally precise than his first film. The script was verified where the events had taken place.

In the taiga in the Far East, young people are building a town. They live in earthen huts, in cramped, uncomfortable quarters, and do most of the work by hand. But, as in *The Bold*

*Seven*, it is not things' unpleasant visual aspect that is decisive, but their invisible component — the poetry of a construction project, a major cause shared by all the people. Long ago St. Petersburg was built on the wild banks of the Neva River and perhaps an equally historic project is now being built on the banks of the Amur River.

The centre of this film, too, is occupied by a group of construction workers, members of the Young Communist League, rather than an individual character. The main roles are performed by the same actors: Makarova, Novoseltsev, Aleinikov. The people they play are inwardly rich people, still young, but mature because their unflagging strength is joined to solid experience acquired in an independent, demanding life.

Of course, among thousands of construction workers there are many different types of people. There are also anarchic natures with undefined thoughts and feelings. One of them becomes an instrument in the hands of a cleverly-disguised enemy who skillfully manipulates those with an immature civil conscience.

Strong female characters are a typical feature of all Gerasimov's films. Natasha Solovyova is such a figure in *Komso-molsk*. She cannot accept pettiness in people and if she sees the slightest trace of such inner cowardice, she turns away from this person, even if she had loved that person before. Through such characters Gerasimov points out that we should not confuse femininity with weakness and indifference.

Gerasimov's third film, *The Teacher*, was about young people in the pre-war years. His hero Stepan Lautin (played by Boris Chirkov), is a mild and modest man by nature, not inclined to compete with his ambitious fellow-students. When he graduates from the institute, he returns to his native village and becomes an ordinary schoolteacher.

Many of his fellow villagers do not understand his choice; they suspect that he simply is not capable of bigger things. Even his own father is disappointed in him. But Stepan sees his modest, patient work as a teacher as a lofty moral task.

A young man studies at public expense, acquires an education, and people have a right to expect a good example and wise words from him. The people have a great need of this. The village of course has changed greatly during the years of Soviet power. But backwardness is not to be overcome so quickly, and activists like Stepan are strongly needed. They always existed, this was a sacred tradition of the Russian intelligentsia, a tradition that cannot be broken.

The new form of village life was reflected in many films in the thirties. *The Peasants* features a Communist (played by Nikolai Bogolyubov) who spearheads the struggle against the kulaks. The action takes place in Siberia. The authors did not smooth over the dramatic nature of the struggle to build state collective farms, nor did they soften the often sharp contours of events that took place around this struggle. This is characteristic of Friedrich Ermler, who did not hesitate to depict life's dark side and sombre, unattractive details. These details were never a goal in themselves in Ermler's films, rather a means of conveying the real drama of daily life to the audience.

The film *Member of the Government* was acknowledged as a major accomplishment of cinema in the thirties—in its content, directing skill, and acting performances. It told the story of a simple peasant woman who becomes chairman of a new village and then deputy to the Supreme Soviet. The actress Vera Maretskaya gave a strong and realistic performance in portraying her heroine's full life, her brave struggle with enemies of the collective farm system and remnants of the old way of life.

The thirties were a period during which a strongly actor-based cinema appeared. Such memorable figures as Boris Andreev, Nikolai Kryuchkov, Lyubov Orlova, Lev Sverdlin, and Nikolai Cherkasov emerged at this time, all of them highly distinctive and important actors. Vera Maretskaya was one of them.

In *Member of the Government* directors Aleksandr Zarkhi and Iosif Heifits resolutely rejected so-called 'type-casting',

according to which actors are chosen because of an external or 'internal' similarity to their roles. This leaves little margin for the pleasant surprises and discoveries that are an inherent part of every art. Instead, cinema orientates itself towards the 'known', the familiar, what has already been professionally mastered.

Although this might seem paradoxical at first sight, it is precisely the lack of conformity between the physical and psychological elements of the actor and his role, Zarkhi says, that makes for success, that enables the actor to truly interpret the main idea. This is very understandable, for it is only in such circumstances that the actor must re-discover everything.

It may have seemed totally inappropriate at first for 32-year-old Nikolai Cherkasov to play the 70-year-old Professor Polezhaev, or for Vladimir Gardin, who usually played social figures from the past, to play the senior worker Babchenko in *Counterplan*, or for Vera Maretskaya to play the peasant woman Aleksandra Sokolova, or for Boris Babochkin, who was first tested for the role of a White Guard officer (because of external similarity!) to play Chapaev.

But practice has shown that all the most outstanding film performances have been given when the actor had to seriously study a part very different from his own persona.

The most advanced film-makers' efforts to realistically and truthfully depict Soviet reality in its historical development disclosed many new talents in the national film studios. A young director now made his debut in the Ukraine, the son of a working-class family, Leonid Lukov. He devoted all his films to the theme of workers. His *A Great Life* (Part I) remained on the screens for a long time and was sincerely loved by its audiences. Even today its vitality, optimism, and unvarnished sense of truth in depicting the life and work of Donbass coalminers is infectious. Its director wanted to show truthfully the difficulties that existed in introducing a new socialist attitude towards labour into miners' lives, and how

mutual help, workers' solidarity, and collective spirit became an accepted part of mining.

Script-writer Pavel Nilin and the director avoided simplified solutions and prettifying these problems, preferring to show sharp conflicts. Miner Kuzma Kozodoev (played by Ivan Peltser), from a family of miners, has developed a new method of extracting coal which has proved controversial. This conflict shows the struggle between old and new and causes tempers to flare and characters to mature. The figures of Balun (acted by B. Andreev), and Vanya Kursky (acted by P. Aleinikov) are particularly outstanding, and Mark Bernes also gives a fine performance as engineer Petukhov. Composer Nikita Bogoslovsky's songs for the film were also extremely popular.

*A Great Life* (Part I) was one of the thirties' most successful films on the subject of new men produced by the times, the working class, and miners.

It was also at this time that Ivan Pyriev made his *Party Card*, also about working-class life. Its interesting plot deals with class struggle, which in new conditions acquires particularly complex forms. The main character, Anka (played by Ada Voitsik), a worker at a military supplies factory, encounters a cleverly disguised enemy (a memorable performance from A. Abrikosov).

The theme of the struggle by the people, the working class, and the Communist Party against the enemies of the socialist system was well presented, though somewhat controversially, in Friedrich Ermler's major film, *A Great Citizen*. Nikolai Bogolyubov gave a psychologically well-motivated performance as the Party leader Shakhov. Today this film is criticised, however, for its reflection of a mistaken theory concerning the supposedly intensified nature of class struggle accompanying the further development of socialist society.

The reflection of the stages in socialist construction in feature films of the thirties is not exhausted by the films discussed above. Studios in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Tbilisi, Erevan, and other cultural centres expanded their film produc-

tion, and the number of well-trained directors, script-writers, actors, and cameramen continued to grow. Films in various genres, with different themes, and styles continued the active search for new forms of cognition of life through realistic art.

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The thirties witnessed the dawn of the Soviet comedy film. True, not all the comic genres developed at the time, predominantly those that used humour and comedy to affirm what was new in socialist society: people's comradely relations, the atmosphere of enthusiastic labour on the new construction projects, and the romanticism of scientific discoveries and inventions.

The popular mood of the times was accurately reflected in the musical comedies of Igor Savchenko, Grigori Aleksandrov, Ivan Pyriev, and Aleksandr Ivanovsky.

The comedy *Harmonica*, made by talented Ukrainian director Igor Savchenko, was a memorable event in the early thirties. The newspaper *Pravda* praised it, calling it 'the first Soviet musical comedy film' (June 27, 1934). It was based on a poem of the same name by the popular poet Aleksandr Zharov. The film had a simple enough plot. A young fellow named Dudkin is made secretary of the local Young Communist League organisation and takes it into his head that it would now be undignified for him to play his harmonica in the village. His harmonica is no longer heard and the young people become bored. The village kulaks, enemies of the new social system, immediately make use of this, and under their influence drunkenness begins to grow, followed by rowdiness and dissipation. Realising his mistake, Dudkin takes up his harmonica again and sings songs that fill the quiet village streets at night, praising the new life and collective labour.

Today *Harmonica* looks very different to us for it is full of faults and miscalculations. It has become dated, but it was

the debut of a gifted director who soon afterwards made a magnificent film in an entirely different genre — *Bogdan Khmelnitsky*.

Aleksandrov's comedy *Jolly Fellows* did not bring up topical problems in an obvious way. It dealt with the birth of a musical group and it had a good sense of atmosphere, mood, and feeling.

This film received a prize at the First International Venice Film Festival, where it was applauded because, as the press wrote at the time, it disclosed the Soviet people's soul. Chaplin later wrote that Aleksandrov opened up a new Russia for America. He observed that before *Jolly Fellows* Americans knew Dostoevsky's Russia, but now they had seen the major changes in the psychology of people who could laugh boldly and merrily. Chaplin regarded it as a great triumph.

In the films made jointly by Aleksandrov and the composer Dunaevsky (*Jolly Fellows*, *Circus*, and *Volga-Volga*) the music was written at the same time as the script. It arose as the essence, idea, and culmination of the entire film (the song about the Homeland, for instance, in *Circus*), for songs were at that time the most democratic, most promising musical genre for the expression of ideological content.

Aleksandrov's comedies touched on the principles underlying socialist life. The theme of his *Bright Path* was socialist labour, free, creative, labour which had become a personal need; the main idea behind *Circus* was racial equality and international solidarity; while *Volga-Volga* dealt with the emerging of new talents among the people.

Aleksandrov's films were a showcase for the talented lyrical-comic actress, Lyubov Orlova, who interpreted the leading roles in *Jolly Fellows*, *Circus*, *Volga-Volga*, and *Bright Path*. Soviet film comedies of the thirties initiated the comedy of characters. Films of this type were *Three Comrades*, *By the Blue Sea*, *A Girl with Character*, *The Lost Home* and individual characters in films of other genres.

The musical comedies made by elder director Aleksandr



Ivanovsky, *A Musical Story* and *Anton Ivanovich Loses His Temper* reflected the rising cultural standards of the Soviet people and the growth of musical culture in our country; these films stand out for their directorial inventiveness, well-coordinated ensemble of actors, and organic fusion of music and action. These films were enormously popular.

The unpretentious plot of *Four Hearts*, made by talented comedy director Konstantin Yudin, had main characters who were so vivid that we could tell their past, beginning with childhood, and imagine how they would be twenty or thirty years later. These figures were independent, original, and life-like, despite the fact that the film had the original intention of dealing with the very topical contemporary theme of the importance of cooperation and friendship between scientists and army men, and to poeticise — on the eve of war — the Soviet commander and the Soviet Army.

A whole group of outstanding comic actors appeared as a result of this tendency, actors whose style was strictly realistic, without a trace of stylisation, whose interpretations of roles were profoundly comic, yet capable of expressing subtle psychological details.

The roles played by Mikhail Zharov — the Director Zaitsev in *Three Comrades*, reckless Kudryash in *Thunderstorm*, Menshikov in *Peter the Great*, and Gavril in *Bogdan Khmelnitsky* had a Falstaffian charm and an almost hypnotic ability to draw the listener into his way of thinking.

Nikolai Kryuchkov, who acted in Ivan Pyriev's comic *The Tractor-Drivers* and *The Swineherd and the Shepherd*, and in Boris Barnet's *Outskirts* and *By the Blue Sea* was memorable for his spontaneous, facial expressiveness, movements, and intonations as he played uncomplicated, temperamental young fellows.

The characters played by the talented comic actor Sandro Zhorzholiani gave a very clear impression of the national characteristics of men from western Georgia, yet they were also close for audiences of any national background.

Igor Ilinsky, Erast Garin, and Sergei Martinson were highly gifted comic actors who represented another school of acting. The characters they played were developed by the skillful use of caricature and eccentric touches.

Another important and innovative trait in Soviet comedy also emerged in these years.

In traditional bourgeois comedies made abroad, the positive heroes were usually lucky, 'noble' adventurers and cunning types who achieve their mercenary goals by devious means.

Soviet comedies renewed another comic tradition rooted deep in history and popular practices. This was the tradition of the buffoon, the sharp wit, the heroes of satirical tales about soldiers and artisans, and the writers of witty farces and carnival acts. They poked fun at greed, egotism, and injustice, while buoying up their audience's joyful perception of the world and sense of civic responsibility.

It was this type of 'mass mood', characteristic of Soviet life in the 1930s that inspired Ivan Pyriev's comedies *A Rich Bride* (1938), *The Tractor-Drivers*, and *The Swineherd and the Shepherd* (1941). These films were all based on life in the collective farm villages and praised collective labour and the new comradely human relations that arose in the villages with the transition to collective agricultural methods.

These 'mass moods' were genuine, derived from life itself, and this is why these comedies attract audiences with their undoubted sincerity. Several of the characters in these films also contained traits of real figures in the collective farm movement that were highly praised at the time — Maria Demchenko, Pelageya Angelina, and others. With their full lives, integrated natures, and optimism these characters are reminiscent of the life-loving characters in Renaissance comedies, yet it is their collectivism, selflessness, and broad view of life that make them stand out. It should be stressed that Pyriev gave special attention to making his musical comedies sharp and accentuated, which is a rare quality in this genre. We should remember that Pyriev began his career in films as a biting satirist, only

later switching to a diametrically opposed genre—musical comedy—yet he retained his ironical cast of mind. This was important because contemporary musicals and musical comedies very often lack this sharpness and precision, which makes them somewhat colourless and flat.

Today Pyriev's comedies are outdated in certain respects, they seem different in the context of the present day; they have their weak points connected with the era in which they were made. But their main quality has remained: their consistent realism, their ability to convey the 'mass mood' and to sense something that is only just beginning to take shape.

Pyriev's comedies provide excellent material for the study of one of the most important categories of the method of socialist realism—the loyalty to the people's ideals. This is not only to be seen in his films' success with audiences and their accessible nature, but above all in the leading figures' characters, as interpreted by Boris Andreev, Nikolai Kryuchkov, and Marina Ladynina. This is particularly true of *The Tractor-Drivers*, a film made on the very eve of the war, when what was to come could already be sensed, affecting even comedies. The filming of *The Swineherd and the Shepherd*, which dealt with Soviet internationalism and friendship between peoples, was completed at Mosfilm's empty studios in the autumn of 1941, and it reflected the war in a very immediate sense.

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The patriotic ideas that were especially characteristic of art in the 1930s were the basis of a new burst of historical-revolutionary films. After *Chapaev*, films dealing with this theme were made at every Soviet studio.

Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg made their best films together, the *Maxim* trilogy, in the thirties.

These films presented the biography of a Bolshevik revolutionary and covered what was perhaps the fullest, most complicated decade in Russian history: the dark years of reaction following the 1905 Revolution, the renewed revolutionary

surge on the eve of the First World War, the triumph of the October Revolution, and the building of the world's first socialist society.

The directors of this trilogy based it on their confidence in life's truth. Life is more complex, richer, and more instructive than the most elaborate story. The most important thing for an artist is to see, hear, and feel life's truth.

Kozintsev and Trauberg arrived at this elementary truth, as it might seem, by a very difficult path. Their career in cinema began in the 1920s with the *Factory of the Eccentric Actor*, where they made a few comedy films that did not have much success with audiences. The underlying reason was that they contained very little from real life and relied too much on spectacular effects. The possibilities in this type of film seemed infinite, but the young directors were soon disappointed and forced to reevaluate their positions.

The films that followed, *The Overcoat* (1926), *The Club of the Big Deed* (1927), and *The New Babylon* (1929) were major accomplishments on the path towards a realistic method for the artistic cognition of reality. All these films dealt with important subjects, but a lack of contact between the filmmakers and reality could be sensed in them. Their expressive means were reminiscent of certain renowned paintings, and the viewer feels that the directors were proceeding not from life itself, but from art. Nor was the philosophical interpretation of the main characters very original: these characters fighting for a new life and bright ideals were portrayed as solitary and helpless, doomed to perish as they fought against a sluggish, immobile reality.

*Alone* (1931) was not entirely successful, either. But this film was an important step forward, for its directors now turned to contemporary life, studied it, and wrote their own script about it. However, this film's heroine is also alone: the milieu is shown as sluggish and resistant to change, and there are not enough enthusiasts like this young schoolteacher for them all to join forces and cease to be 'alone'.

It was only with *Maxim's Youth* (1934) that Kozintsev and Trauberg succeeded in overcoming this sorrowful, pessimistic note, which they had not heard in life, but in the works of Romantic writers who had made a deep impression on their imaginations.

Kozintsev and Trauberg now moved beyond their spectacular conceptions and scrupulously studied biographies and memoirs by Bolshevik veterans, which they used right down to the very tiniest details in reconstructing the time and the milieu in which their Maxim had grown up and begun his path in life. Yet their recreation was not naturalistic. Above all the directors tried to catch 'the tune' of the era, to sense its emotional atmosphere. They succeeded in this, and that is why the dirty backyards of the working-class suburbs were so affecting, even poetic in their own way on the screen, even though their garbage, chickens pecking in the dust, washing-laden clothes lines, and patchwork blankets put out to be aired could be clearly seen.

The poetry of discomfort and of lives that failed to be what they could have been creates an impression of time, movement, and development. Details of this sort are frequent in the film, furnishing its underlying texture. None of these details are obvious, but creates certain lateral associations that resound from a distance. But taken all together they create an atmosphere bursting with life.

The best moments in the *Maxim* trilogy are those in which the directors' artistic spontaneity appears. It is difficult to explain why, but the very 'architecture' of the dull workers' houses is somehow touching, as are the leaning streetlamp, intensifying the blackness of the street at night, the cemetery and the tooting of the steamers in the distance, the popular speech and inflections of the people who inhabit the workers' suburb. The directors absorbed this milieu to the point where they could disclose its living poetry and attractive qualities beneath its surface. Kozintsev and Trauberg studied the songs of these working-class suburbs in detail, and read and reread

*The Kopeck*, a newspaper published especially for 'the common people'.

Three friends live in a working-class settlement on the outskirts of Petersburg: Andrei, Dmitry, and Maxim. They don't understand politics very well, nor are they really interested in politics. Their favourite song is 'Twirling and Swirling the Sky-Blue Globe...', and this is the entire trilogy's theme song.

But Maxim's youth ends abruptly when Andrei dies and Dmitry is executed after killing a policeman as a demonstration was being broken up. Maxim immediately grows up and begins to understand things. His sorrow at the death of his friends remains with him for the rest of his life. This sorrow is felt throughout the trilogy, binding it together like the song's melody. His friends' memory is present in everything that Maxim says, does, and thinks.

But this sorrow is optimistic. Generally speaking, everything that occurs — and this is an important new trait in Kozintsev and Trauberg's work — is free of that undercurrent of fatality and solitude that had emotionally coloured their previous films.

The trilogy has no superficially spectacular camerawork. Rather, it is based on a profound, inner meaning, on the romantic quality of heroic actions. The trilogy's first part is a biography of Maxim, a story of the birth of a professional revolutionary. The Second Part, *The Return of Maxim* (1937) is more like a novel in breadth. It encompasses the whole era, disclosing the complexity of the Bolsheviks' activity during a renewed upsurge of revolutionary feeling.

Maxim is a new type of hero. At some point he has understood that the cause he is working for will triumph. It cannot fail to triumph, for it is humane and directed against injustice and falsehood. The directors stress Maxim's great inner freedom: he always remains true to himself, he is always natural, unaffected, witty, and inventive, and his optimism contains great historical truth.

The doors of the tsarist prison open to let Maxim out at last, he emerges into the sunlight, and he is happy at the thought that he is not alone, that he has friends everywhere, brothers in the great cause. And so he bids farewell to Natasha, the friend of his militant youth, and departs for the vast expanses of Russia, not knowing when he is destined to return. Over his shoulder he carries a stick with a small bundle suspended from it.

*The Vyborg Side* (1938) shows Maxim as a major political figure: the Party has acknowledged his services to the Revolution. Yet Maxim has not changed. His words and gestures have not become grand or pretentious, and he is as impatient as ever with bombast and showy effects.

Maxim's simplicity is not just one more trait in his character, a trait that could be easily disposed of. His simplicity is fundamental, it is essential to his very understanding of life: either you live for the people, or else they live for you. This simplicity becomes the touch stone of human virtue in the trilogy. A whole gallery of class and ideological antagonists is opposed to Maxim from the position of his simplicity and truly popular spirit: Platon Dymba, 'the King of St. Petersburg billiards' (played by M. Zharov), flashily dressed with a sham worldly manner, while beneath this wrapping he is a cad, a bawd, a primitive being; or the arch adventurer, the lawyer (played by V. Zhukovsky), who defends those who had carried out a *pogrom* by playing on people's most noble feelings, concealing his profound cynicism.

The moral bankruptcy of Maxim's opponents, the enemies of the revolution, is disclosed in this way, in all their moral and aesthetic ugliness.

The country of the world's first socialist revolution is broadly shown on the screen during its decisive decade. A Bolshevik meeting in the forest in springtime. Petrograd of 1914 with its strikes, copies of *Pravda* pasted to the walls, barricades, and the war. A Bolshevik deputy speaks in the State Duma. The first decrees issued by the Soviet government. The plundering

of the wine cellars organised by anarchists and Socialist Revolutionaries. The counter-revolutionary activity by the SR Ropshin. Preparations for the assassination attempt on Lenin. Sabotage by the bureaucrats. The trial of the bandits and participants in the *pogrom*.

At the end of *The Vyborg Side* Maxim again bids farewell to Natasha and leaves for the front. The Civil War has begun.

The trilogy had a phenomenal success. Audiences waited for it to be continued. Lenfilm Studio was inundated with letters requesting, advising, even demanding that Maxim's screen life be continued. Scripts were sent with titles like 'Maxim in the Civil War', 'Maxim in Central Asia', and 'Maxim—Plenipotentiary of the Land of the Soviets Abroad'.

Boris Chirkov, who acted the role of Maxim in the film, received letters addressed to Maxim, asking his advice as a simple, responsive, 'reliable' person. A work of fiction had become a fact of life.

The 1930s in Soviet cinema were a time when the historical-revolutionary genre flourished. Many films on this theme were produced. They dealt with the heroic stages in preparing and carrying out the October Revolution, and with unforgettable episodes from the Civil War.

There was something very special and innovative about these films. They recorded the new creative powers of a people that realised its great historical task—to found a genuinely humane, just life. Even the most ordinary characters have grandeur and beauty when they are conscious of this task.

A new form was found for films of this genre: not the narrow circle of those who directly participate in a traditional drama, but a large-scale chronicle-epic with a large number of participants.

As a rule, large collectives occupied a central position in the first Soviet films. Several films were named after factories (*Arsenal*), ships (*Battleship 'Potemkin'*), and others. The cinema was still slow in making its way towards the depiction



of individual heroism, the expression of the inner motives behind a feat, and the psychology of an heroic accomplishment.

This path was difficult because there were no such traditions to draw on. Pre-revolutionary Russian cinema did depict characters carrying out extraordinary feats demonstrating their courage and spiritual nobility, but these characters usually acted, in the final analysis, 'for themselves': either for more or less disguised selfish ends, or as a means of protest. There was never a hint of these figures' interest in the people's truth or their participation in a struggle for progressive ideals.

This is also characteristic of many foreign directors today whose films show courageous, resolute people performing bold actions. But these heroes also act 'for themselves', as a rule, for the sake of 'individual' ideals.

Soviet art was basically the first to travel this path.

Silent films reflecting the Revolution were broad-scale and grandiose in their scope, but they did not present psychologically detailed portraits of people. Now, with the advent of sound, it became possible to do this. *The Baltic Deputy* (1937), directed by Zarkhi and Heifits, offers a good example.

This film had a highly documental basis. Its central figure, Professor Polezhaev, was very reminiscent—in certain character traits and biographical details—of the outstanding Russian scholar, Klement Timiryazev.

The film's action begins in November 1917 in Petrograd. 'Dim outlines of bread lines in the dark. Downcast people—men and women—sit and stand in the rain... There is only enough bread for four days in Petrograd...' A special detachment made up of several armed sailors and soldiers are making the rounds, searching for hoarded food supplies in bourgeois homes. One of the flats searched is that of Dmitry Polezhaev, a well-known scientist.

This is our first encounter with the hero of this film, which raises the thorny, eternal problem of the intelligentsia and the people, the intelligentsia and the Revolution. This problem

arose in an acute form in Russia in October 1917. Not all intellectuals were able to resolve it correctly. Many scientists, artists, writers, and specialists left their homeland at a time when it needed their knowledge and talent especially badly. They did not understand the Revolution, were afraid of the people, and betrayed the Russian intelligentsia's tradition of working for the people, bringing them knowledge and culture.

The film's major virtue lies in the fact that its directors did not simplify events, but showed them as they really were.

A struggle against counter-revolution and black-marketeers is underway in Petrograd—a harsh and unpleasant struggle. Polezhaev's pupil, the lecturer Vorobyov regards it as a wild outburst by the 'scum'. He is Professor Polezhaev's ideological antagonist.

Elderly Professor Polezhaev sees the Revolution as the realisation of the age-old striving by the best minds to eliminate the injustice causing inequality between men and allowing some people to live at the expense of others. A member of the intelligentsia, a scholar, must join the people, help them, and educate them.

This film's style lies in its subtle psychological analysis and broad, varied use of details directly observed in life. That remarkable actor, Nikolai Cherkasov, stressed in a subtle, unobtrusive manner his character's age, professorial qualities, and his traits as a member of the intelligentsia—the Russian intelligentsia with its traditional simplicity and sense of democracy.

The directors showed Professor Polezhaev in the process of change for he had not always understood the people as he later came to understand them. The revolutionary events explained a great deal. The professor then found his place in the major historical rebuilding of a society on truly just principles. One of the last shots shows him speaking from a podium before revolutionary sailors as their deputy, a political figure. His sense of having chosen the right path, of being one with the people, whom he serves not out of a sense of

duty but 'from the heart', makes him young again.

One of the most important achievements in the historical-revolutionary genre was the film *We Are From Kronstadt* (1936), directed by Efim Dzigan from a script by Vsevolod Vishnevsky. This film treated the situation that arose in the Soviet Russia in the autumn of 1919. Lenin wrote in an appeal at this time: 'A few days will decide the fate of the city, and that means half the fate of Soviet power in Russia.' \*

This film tells of the heroic defence of Petrograd by Kronstadt sailors and Petrograd workers against interventionists and White Guards.

The script-writer, a great admirer of *Battleship 'Potemkin'*, kept this latter film in mind while working on *Kronstadt*, as well as on other works. Vishnevsky explained his dramatic credo thus: 'I have repeatedly tested the possibilities of animating subjects such as cities, fortresses, forts, and regiments, and I am convinced that new historical scales make it possible to see the relationships between collectives or masses differently... I predict the appearance of poetic scripts about relations between countries and cities... Our cinema has already tried to find its way along this path, and I am certain that it shall carry on doing so most energetically...'

Dzigan also undertook this search, but he regarded the methods of type-casting used by Eisenstein in *Battleship 'Potemkin'* as unsuitable for sound-films. He saw a way out of this in a more detailed picture of circumstances, atmosphere, and characters. The correspondence between Dzigan and Vishnevsky during the preparatory work on the script and film presents a great interest. The director insistently demanded more and more details and character traits from the writer, and Vishnevsky, who knew the Baltic fleet very well, drew heavily on stories recounted by participants and his own memories. Gradually the script acquired a more visual, cinematic form. A unity between genre and composition began to take

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, p. 68.

shape that was both lyric and epic in form. The film took the form of recollections by an eyewitness about the unforgettable events. This gave the film a highly emotional colouring. The details in it serve not only to describe the place and time, they are also highly expressive, for they have remained alive in the memory of an eyewitness many years after the event.

Unlike *Battleship 'Potemkin'* the main characters—who also make up a collective group—are described in greater detail, although somewhat tersely. Each character has his individual traits, and this makes each of them life-like, not just functional in purpose, an individual with his own path in life. The commissar, Martynov, for instance, has a whole life behind him. He is a former political emigre tempered in the fight against tsarism... The sailor Besprozvany with his ever-present guitar, deft and confident, the son of an officer and his cook, as he introduces himself; the stoker Anton Karabash, a former political prisoner, a sailor in the Potemkin tradition; infantry commander, Jan Draudin, a Latvian; the infantryman Vassily with whom the sailor Artem Balashov argues at the beginning of the film and who is very similar to script-writer Vsevolod Vishnevsky in many ways. The atmosphere of the events is also more individualised than functionalised. The camerawork and descriptive details are striking, 'recognizable' even for a person who has never visited these places with their Baltic autumn coolness; everything tends to make a man especially serious, concentrated, and to give him a loftiness of thought and feeling. That is the source of sailors' bravado, their special jokes, manner of speaking, which is both rich in imagery and extremely laconic.

The film tells tragically of the death of the sailors taken prisoner by the Whites. None of them asked for mercy, every man acknowledged himself a Communist and died valiantly, his last glance filled with hatred for the enemy. *We Are From Kronstadt* was a film with enormous emotional power, praised by the Soviet and foreign press. The men and women who fought for republican Spain admired the film. During the Sec-

ond World War it again proved a great mobilising force; it was screened on the ships that had defended Kronstadt and these screenings were often interrupted by air alerts.

During work on this film, the director and his group developed a means to create film with a plot and compositional structure capable of dealing with large-scale events and a broad range of characters. Sharp and memorable details, at once 'functional' and individual, were typical of this film and later helped its director to overcome a certain lack of cinematic quality in Serafimovich's famous novel, *The Iron Flood*. Many of the artistic devices in *We Are From Kronstadt* became well established in the poetics of films treating revolutionary themes and the Second World War.

The best films of the 1930s treated the heroism of the Civil War in a distinctive fashion. The events were not so far in the past, were still fresh in people's memories and sharply felt.

Dovzhenko began work on *Shchors* at a time when audiences had already seen Russian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Byelorussian, and Armenian films telling of the struggle waged by the Soviet peoples against their enemies and the triumph of Soviet power. *Chapaev*, *We Are From Kronstadt*, *The Baltic Deputy*, *Zangezur*, *The Last Night*, and other films had already shown the enormous possibilities of film as an art-form in a new manner.

*Shchors* was filmed at a time when the threat of war could clearly be sensed overshadowing the country. These two circumstances greatly influenced Dovzhenko's film.

The division commanded by Shchors is advancing across the Ukraine to a 'final, decisive' battle, which will liberate its native land from tsarism, from 'native' exploiters, and from interventionists.

This film does not contain the bold metaphors or free-ranging historical discursions that are so typical of Dovzhenko's previous films. The film would seem to be entirely within the stylistic tradition that had become a part of Soviet cinema in the 1930s. Nonetheless, upon closer inspection *Shchors* discloses these same, familiar traits of Dovzhenko's individual

style, his perception and reflection of the world. There are no direct historical discursions, but there are echoes between the past and the future. Dovzhenko succeeded in showing present reality in such a way that the historical past shines through it. One example of this is the meeting between Shchors and the rebels. Here we see signs of the historical period which the film treats as a whole, but also echoes from the Ukrainian people's distant past, when ragged runaways joined forces with the Dnieper Cossacks against their social and national enemies. This is a deliberate device and it has a profound meaning, for the Communist commander Shchors is continuing the liberation struggle carried on by the legendary heroes of the Ukrainian people at various times in their history.

Dovzhenko's principles for characterising people are also present here. He likes to show people at 'moments of truth', when everything trivial and insignificant is brushed aside. He strives to show people who are 'of the spirit', inspired by a dream, rather than simply 'emotional'. That is why the individual verbal characteristics of Dovzhenko's heroes are overlooked in his films. Nearly all of them express themselves in a vivid, elevated manner. Their speech is metaphorical. Psychological nuances of character are not a part of Dovzhenko's style. Neither Vasil, Timosh, nor Shchors, nor even his colourful side-kick Old Bozhenko, who are characterised in some detail, can be compared with Soviet cinema's then popular heroes in their life-like depiction or recognizable qualities. But this is not an oversight. Dovzhenko is interested in moral and aesthetic values, and it is in their relation to these values that his heroes show their individual, unique, yet universally human traits. Is it really important from this point of view what sort of temperament, habits, mannerisms, and way of speaking a man has? People differ from each other not because of their individual nuances, but because of their attitudes towards these lofty values, their philosophy, their life's credo. Even in terms of their life-like qualities, people like Timosh, Vasil, Shchors, and the characters to be found

in the last, Ivan Orlyuk and Krivchina, are too large-scale for their individual quirks and habits to stand out. Their firmness of purpose, concentration, and strong will-power exclude those everyday touches that are often added in an attempt to liven up characters who are monumental in their lives, touches that do not disclose their genuine human value.

Above all, Dovzhenko's heroes strike us with their particular force of inspiration. They have something in common with those figures who fill the canvases of that major Soviet painter, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. The angles chosen are similar—severe, not typical of daily life: either profiles or full face-forward. There are no softened contours, only a wise silence, for these people are not just clarifying their relationships between each other, but between themselves, the world, nature, society, and history.

The feeling of space is also conveyed in Dovzhenko's films along these same lines. It cannot be taken in with a simple glance, it can only be comprehended through thought. The topography of Dovzhenko's films is noteworthy. His characters usually stand on elevated ground with a far-ranging view beyond them. They seem to be standing on the earth's very pinnacle.

Petrov-Vodkin also made frequent use of this type of perspective. His *Mother* with her child are seated on a height, while fields, a forest, and a blue river roll by in the distance. *The Boys* are playing on a hillside and the whole world is stretched out before them, everything awaits them. A commissar is dying and his last glance from the captured heights takes in the whole surrounding area far below (*The Commissar's Death*).

Petrov-Vodkin rejected linear perspective as a means of achieving an illusion of life-likeness. It was more important to him to disclose man's inner world, not his physical perceptions, but his spiritual ones.

Dovzhenko's characters, like Dovzhenko himself, feel every

individual event in which they participate to be of earth-shaking importance. 'How far a man can see! How great he is despite his smallness! His life only lasts a moment on this small planet, lost on the outskirts of one of a hundred million galaxies, yet he embraces the universe—all of it, without beginning or end!'

A great artist tries to convey the invisible world of spiritual values, to make it visible and tangible for people. One example of this is Petrov-Vodkin's painting *After the Battle*. The last shots have died away, the cannons' rumble has grown silent, and the clanking of swords is no longer heard. Three men remain in the stillness after the battle. Their eyes have lost the furious lustre of battle, and they are now calm and dispassionate. They remember what has just taken place as if it were in the distant historical past.

In *Shchors* the main characters dream of the future while they await an impending battle, and their dreams go far into the depths of time because they live by other laws and measure time by other standards when faced by a battle from which they may not return.

During a brief respite between battles, Shchors and his soldiers 'are carried forward by their thoughts into the centuries to come', where they converse with their descendants. In their minds they see the earth encompassed by luxuriously flowering apple orchards. From the heights of the future they examine the present moment and themselves.

The new era advanced the massive heroism of a revolutionary people onto the social arena, and the era of the October Revolution made a reality of this heroic character.

Dovzhenko's work discloses the nature of heroism in the new historical era. His characters are not alone, nor are they isolated figures, but are representatives of a heroic people...

Dovzhenko's films feature many static long shots. They are reminiscent of paintings in their expressive completeness, in their painterly qualities. Throughout his life Dovzhenko



remained faithful to his first love, painting. The genuine feel of a painter's canvas is typical of all his films, and has been noted by many art historians, both Soviet and foreign. This quality is explained by his love for long shots with their lack of dynamism and static quality. This might seem alien to cinematic methods, but in Dovzhenko's films such compositions acquire a special meaning. Sometimes it is necessary to give the audience time to concentrate, to gather their thoughts, and to get into what is taking place on the screen. The dynamics of cinema has its drawbacks: a fleeting succession of shots cannot really be absorbed, they tend rather to affect the subconscious, to suggest things independently of the will of the viewer, who is placed in a near-hypnotic state by the speed of the montage. This results in the viewer developing a fleeting, skimming view of what is occurring before his eyes, a superficial attitude towards it. Dovzhenko prefers painterly cinema to dynamic cinema. He defends the rights of painting, seeing elements in it that can compensate for dynamism's drawbacks. This problem, which he posed for the first time, has in certain respects become even more important today.

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In the latter half of the 1930s a major place was occupied by films that can be termed anti-fascist. Their appearance was a direct result of the unfavourable turn of events in nazi Germany. Among the films in this category were *The Fighters*, *Karl Brunner*, *The Battle Continues*, *Marsh Soldiers*, *Professor Mamlok*, and *The Oppenheim Family*. Although their artistic qualities were uneven, they played an important role in the ideological struggle against fascism at this time. They were made on the very eve of the Second World War.

During this same period films were also produced on defence themes and other similar subjects. Devoted to the theme of patriotism, these films urged the Soviet people to be watchful during those tense years when German aggression was growing

stronger and a number of capitalist countries were turning a blind eye to fascism.

Dovzhenko, all of whose films were devoted to the lofty values on which life in socialist society is based, was also an artist who had a keen feeling for the spirit of the times. His film *Aerograd* (1935) dealt with the cataclysmic events to come. In an article entitled 'Why I Filmed *Aerograd*' he stated: 'I shall not be revealing any military secret if I say that we may be at war in a few years' time.'

*Aerograd* was permeated with a severe poetry. Landscapes with airplanes flying over the taiga, Soviet soldiers carrying out their duty on the border, and people living in a past that could now never return. The whole of this film with its musical nature and broad sweep is filled with an unspoken presentiment of something enormous, powerful, inevitably drawing near.

Enemy agents, saboteurs penetrate the taiga, men fanatically devoted to defending their out-dated, reactionary 'truth'. They show a great deal of personal courage, boldness, and readiness to fight to the last breath.

Fleets of planes soar high above the taiga. In the 1930s aviation had the force of a poetic symbol, it was a romantic emblem of movement and the future. A sense of disquiet and echoes of the threat hanging over the country come through clearly in *Aerograd*. The entire film is dominated by the atmosphere of an impending storm.

It was in this same thematic key, but another artistic treatment that director Aleksandr Ivanov filmed *On the Border* from a script by Pyotr Pavlenko; the story dealt with spying and provocation by militarists in the Soviet Far East. Audiences were now seeing many new things and coming into direct contact with unpleasant truths that only recently had become part of their consciousnesses. Films like *Aerograd*, *On the Border*, and other similar productions contained convincing depictions of Soviet patriots, dealt with the unity between the Red Army and the people, and showed the vigour and strength of the socialist system.

It was during this period that Yuly Raizman directed *Pilots*, which contained Boris Shchukin's outstanding performance in the role of the Communist pilot, Rogachev. The film dealt with a modest flying school, and unforgettably depicted pilots as men with outstanding human qualities, genuine Communists in life and in work.

Mikhail Kalatozov's film *Courage* told of the work of Soviet pilots in the country's border areas. Especially memorable was the figure of the brave pilot, Tomilin, as acted by the talented Oleg Zhakov.

Together with pilot Georgy Baidukov, a Hero of the Soviet Union, and other associates, Kalatozov made *Valery Chkalov*, a film that told about this heroic Soviet pilot (played by V. Belokurov) on the very eve of the war.

Director Efim Dzigan—famous for *We Are From Kronstadt*—made *If There Is War Tomorrow* which attempted to depict the course of the inevitable war against German fascism. Other films treating similar themes were *Your Homeland Is Calling You*, *A Deep Raid*, *Tank-Drivers*, *Squadron Five*, and others. Naturally, these films did not entirely understand the character of the coming war and their conception of its true scale was inaccurate.

On the very eve of the war many films were released in the Soviet Union praising heroic feats, self-sacrifice, and patriotism. Some of them showed the country's glorious revolutionary past, the Civil War, the struggle against foreign military intervention (*The Baltic Deputy*, *We Are From Kronstadt*, *Days in Volochaevsk*, *Shchors*, and *Yakov Sverdlov*). Many films depicted contemporary heroism with great artistic power—the most outstanding of these were *Aerograd*, *The Thirteen*, *The Great Citizen*, *Fighter Planes*, *Courage*, and *Valery Chkalov*. An important place among pre-war films were those dealing with the patriotic feats of our ancestors: *Aleksandr Nevsky*, *Peter the Great*, *Minin and Pozharsky*, *Suvorov*, and *Bogdan Khmel'nitsky*.

The three films *Lenin in October*, *Lenin in 1918*, and *Man*

*With a Gun* occupy a special place here, for they laid the foundation for the later depiction of Lenin's life and work on the screen.

The best films made by Soviet cinematographers in the 1930s acquired the significance of major social events. Permeated with patriotic feelings and upholding the lofty values of socialist society, these films fulfilled an enormous role in morally preparing the Soviet people for the severe test at hand.

## FILMS ABOUT LENIN

November 6, 1937 is a memorable date in the history of Soviet cinema. On this day, the eve of the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution, the premiere of a film entitled *Lenin in October* took place at Moscow's Bolshoy Theatre; this film was a major event and opened a new, vitally important theme in Soviet cinema—the treatment of Lenin's life and work on the screen. For the first time in cinema, and in dramatic art in general, the genius behind the Socialist Revolution, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, was the main character and his life and work were the central point of a dramatic work.

True, long before this, after his famous *Battleship 'Potemkin'*, Sergei Eisenstein made *October* together with Grigori Aleksandrov, a film that attempted to recreate Lenin's image on the screen by artistic means. The main role was given to a worker from the Urals, Vassily Nikandrov, who bore a striking external resemblance to Lenin. Type-casting held sway in cinema at this time, and Eisenstein rejected any artificiality in portraying Lenin, including make-up for the actor. Unfortunately, Nikandrov only played a few scenes successfully—for instance, in the episode showing Lenin being met at Petrograd's Finland Station. Critics justly remarked that Nikandrov's face—especially when his eyes were visible—lacked any trace of Lenin's thought or inner fire, and this made it impossible to accept him as Lenin. Mayakovsky was right in his negative reaction to Eisenstein's experiment. After this failure, film-makers hesitated a long time before making another try. It was only a decade later that *Lenin in October* succeeded in solving this difficult task.

But we must make a short digression at this point.

Foreign readers often ask: why are films about Lenin accorded such importance in Soviet cinema? This is an

entirely natural question and requires a solid answer.

First of all, we should recall that from its very beginning Soviet cinema saw its main task as being the affirmation by cinematic means of life's positive aspects, the support of what is new, advanced, and best, man's most noble thoughts and feelings.

Soviet cinema has inherited the advanced traditions and best attainments in Russian and world literature and art of the past. The generation of revolutionaries who made a reality of the day mankind's best minds had dreamed of were educated on literary images. The October Revolution called forth the creative work of artists who, in all the arts, strove to affirm the new hero, the new man—an active fighter for the most advanced social ideals.

The high point of Soviet cinema in the 1920s was Eisenstein's *Battleship 'Potemkin'*. The out-dated hero was replaced by a new one—a fighter, the people who had entered the arena of historical creation. The collective and the people as heroes were two typical traits of Soviet cinema in the 1920s. The intensity of those tumultuous days during the first revolutionary years did not always allow attentive study of individual character or psychology.

However, with the appearance of sound films and, what is more important, with the development of new socialist society, a more deeply individualised depiction of the revolutionary hero began to develop. In this vein were the films *Chapaev*, about the Civil War hero, the *Maxim* trilogy (*Maxim's Youth*, *The Return of Maxim*, *The Vyborg Side*), the story of a young worker who becomes a Bolshevik and revolutionary, *The Baltic Deputy*, *We Are From Kronstadt*, *A Night in Petersburg*, *Shchors*, *The Last Night*, *Zangezur*, and many others. The common element in all these films, which had different themes, styles, varying artistic worth and skill, and which were filmed in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi, Erevan, and Odessa, was the striving on the part of the script-writers, directors, and actors to disclose the people's historic struggle for a new life.

Many articles and lengthier studies have been written on each of these films. Yet everyone — whether they are an adherent or opponent of a given work — has agreed in the main that Soviet cinema is profoundly human, and that the heroes of its best films are people with lofty moral qualities, self-sacrificing fighters for the people's cause.

'The skill of the Vassilyev brothers,' wrote the Soviet press in 1934, 'and all the actors who performed in *Chapaev* made it possible for us to return, as if by magic, to those heroic days when the Revolution had only just won the possibility of building a new life on earth.' 'What is the secret of *Chapaev*?' Maxim Gorky asked, answering his own question thus: 'I think its success is due to the happy marriage of marvellous material with a correct treatment of it by directors who know the laws of art... They were not lured by the tricks of formalist experimentors. Their true teachers were Shakespeare and Tolstoy, both of whom knew the value of a conflict. The Vassilyevs followed the true path of art with plot.' The central place in the film is occupied by Vassily Chapaev (played by Boris Babochkin). Both the hero's outward appearance and inner world change in the course of the film: the carelessly dressed partisan leader becomes a neat, well-organised Red Army commander.

*Chapaev* is a film about a leader and a people, both of whom are heroes. This fundamentally new trait became typical for all Soviet historical-revolutionary films.

The actions of the popular masses and their heroes, struggling to the very last breath, is the mainspring of *We Are From Kronstadt*, the script-writers of which were striving to find a new way of depicting revolutionary material, of freeing themselves from clichés, and from all possible age-old accretions in our ideas and memories, accretions that are literary, theatrical, and cinematographic. By its very style and epic quality this film had certain similarities to *Battleship 'Potemkin'*. The intensified treatment of the theme of revolutionary struggle that Eisenstein achieved, a struggle headed by the Bolsheviks,

and the large-scale depiction on the screen of events and the popular masses is combined in *We Are From Kronstadt* with the development of individual characters.

The Maxim trilogy is the story of a young worker who becomes a professional Bolshevik revolutionary. Grigori Kozintsev, one of the film's directors, stressed: 'Maxim is not an abstract personification of his class. He is a concrete, tangible individual. He goes through the whole trilogy with his clever, cunning smile, at once charming and sincere. The song "Whirling and Twirling the Sky-Blue Globe" is the figure's musical leitmotif. Maxim's character was formed in a difficult struggle, he goes through his first serious reflections as a result of the death of his best friends, he goes through the "university" of prison, exile, the underground, the barricades, through military service, and through the October Revolution.'

The lofty feeling of the October Revolution also fills *The Baltic Deputy*, the major discovery of which was the scholar, Professor Polezhaev, who decisively took sides with the revolutionary people.

The epic sweep of the Civil War in the Ukraine is combined in *Shchors* with the profoundly poetic quality typical of all Aleksandr Dovzhenko's work. Lenin's name resounds in the film as a symbol of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples' unity. Divisional commander Nikolai Shchors carries out his most precious actions in the name of Lenin. Here Shchors is speaking about the front and the hazards of the struggle and what is to come.

'We'll take the land away from the landowners for the peasants... We'll be our own bosses. Is that clear? We're going to do it. I tell you this as Lenin told it to me.'

The film ends with words spoken in Lenin's name, too. Shchors is addressing young commanders, but his words are also directed towards the future.

'Hate slavery like death, love the Revolution like life. I'm telling you this as Lenin told it to me!'

The experience accumulated by Soviet cinema in dealing



with the historical-revolutionary theme was a necessary stage on the path to creating Lenin's image on the screen. And so cinema came face to face with a fundamentally new treatment of the positive hero: to show on the screen a man whose life, without being 'touched-up' in the slightest, is an ideal of human conduct, a well-integrated character embodying the best traits in himself, an example to be imitated, an ideal.

We hardly need to prove that the artist's imagination, even when inspired by the most ardent fantasy, cannot create anything without the help of what already exists, that is, facts from the past and present. It can come as no surprise that in searching for an ideal, an image of the positive hero, film-makers turned again and again to the actions of those men who had made the Revolution, creators of a new history, especially to Lenin and his close associates.

The history of the development of films about Lenin would be incomplete if we ignored the fact that an enormous role in this development was played by the Soviet government and Communist Party. Of course, in the Soviet cinema, as in the cinema of other socialist countries, there are no private producers or entrepreneurs, and all the financial and organisation elements of film production are directly connected with the state system of cultural administration.

Dovzhenko was once asked during a discussion with future cinema directors, 'Should we, as directors, creatively work out themes that interest us or should we accept material needed by the film industry?'

Dovzhenko replied, 'Let us discuss what is of interest to the artist—and I am consciously sticking to your words... We know, for instance, that Raphael painted a great many wonderful pictures when he was still very young. One of these is the large ceiling mural, *The Academy*. Could Raphael have been mature enough at such a young age to choose such a theme on his own? Of course not. He had his directors, his "script-writers", who were men of a particular type—famous priests, cardinals, etc. They counted on Raphael's genius and gave

him assignments, which he carried out brilliantly. Therefore, your question about what is of interest to the artist demands thorough revision.'

Dovzhenko spoke often about the cultural experience of the Renaissance, the mutual relations between teachers and their pupils, clients and artists. His reminder that even Raphael was given direct assignments as to the theme is very instructive. Dovzhenko stressed that ideas were often given to the artist by other people (including 'clients') and this had often led to the creation of an outstanding work in literature, painting, music, or sculpture.

The hero of the best historical-revolutionary films of the 1930s actively entered into historical events, fought for revolutionary ideas, won the right for a new, better life, and by his triumph and even death proved that the common cause was right. This hero never lost hope or forgot about the shining future, nor could his severe trials and intense struggle break his will and inner strength; this hero's character was formed and tempered by his realisation of that the Revolution's triumph was inevitable. This hero was always with the people, he fought and created for the people; in deciding his own destiny, he also decided the destiny of the state. More important, each of these heroes, the most advanced people of the Revolution, expressed the revolutionary impact of Leninist ideas on the masses, the people's attraction towards Lenin's great teaching and Lenin himself, a great, yet ordinary man who understood the people's needs and fought for their interests; each such hero had certain of the great leader's traits in his character. And in each historical-revolutionary film during those years Lenin's invisible presence could be felt as the inspirer and leader of the great revolutionary events.

The creation of powerful, integrated characters from among the people—which together made up the biography of an entire generation—was the most important achievement of Soviet cinema during the thirties. The creative experience of developing the image of the hero in this new era and the

experience of Soviet art as a whole in treating the Leninist theme in its broadest sense formed the basis for a whole series of films about Lenin. Soviet cinema had matured both politically and artistically and was now able to take up the responsible task of portraying the figure of the Soviet leader. The most vivid and important character traits of the heroes from the best historical-revolutionary films could be said to merge into one integral whole in the artistic depiction of Lenin.

The film that initiated the entire cycle about Lenin was *Lenin in October*. It deals with a short, yet intensely packed period of time: from the moment of Lenin's return to Petrograd from Razliv until the storming of the Winter Palace. The script-writers had to show Lenin during a time of great historical events, during a great creative upsurge, in all the heightened intensity of revolutionary struggle. This task was made more difficult by the fact that throughout nearly the entire course of the film, the main character could not participate directly in the revolutionary events; evading Provisional Government agents, Lenin was forced to remain in strict hiding. The drama of the situation arises from Lenin's constant surmounting of his seeming isolation. We constantly feel Lenin's influence on events in those days and his guidance of these events; his unfailing connection with the Party and the people is clearly shown.

The director of this film, Mikhail Romm, and the main actor, Boris Shchukin, tried to reveal the traits of a great historical figure and revolutionary leader in Lenin, refracted, of course, through his distinctive personal traits. The script also gave serious attention to Lenin as a man, and the director made the only decision possible in the course of his work on the film: 'Lenin can only be portrayed as a man when he is portrayed as a leader in every episode, especially in the day-to-day scenes.' This principle dominated the entire film. For instance, in one day-to-day scene in Vassily's flat, Boris Shchukin showed not only Lenin's modesty and simplicity, but above all his will towards the insurrection, his animation

at the struggle ahead. Yet in other scenes where Lenin is acting directly as the leader of the revolutionary masses, Romm and Shchukin strove to emphasise Lenin's human qualities. The natural monumentality of these scenes did not appear in the slightest forced or over-emphasised at any point.

The theme of Lenin's indivisible unity with the people was treated in a vivid and memorable manner in the film. Lenin inspired and organised the broad masses, drew his strength from the people, and had a profound knowledge of the people's needs, wishes, and hopes. But the film also shows how the people sense Lenin's will and leadership: inspired by Lenin's ideas and words, the popular masses unite and prepare for a final, decisive onslaught. This profound link between Lenin and the people is most clearly shown in scenes such as the reading of Lenin's letter by the workers at the factory, the scenes in the conspiratory flat, Lenin's conversation with Vassily's wife, the reading of the letter from the village, and the final scene in the auditorium where the meeting of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets takes place, and at which Lenin announces the victory of the socialist revolution.

The film's main artistic strength lies in Boris Shchukin's performance in the main role. This was a true artistic and civil feat, one for which Shchukin had prepared during his entire acting career, and indeed his entire life. Mikhail Romm wrote: 'No actor can ever convey all the depth and individuality of Lenin, but an actor must achieve and express some most important element for the audience.'\* This 'most important element' that Shchukin tried to emphasise in Lenin was his humanity and simplicity. The actor was entirely right in proceeding from the idea that it was important to attract and hold the audience's attention during the first few minutes and to make them accept Lenin on the screen—this alone made it possible for Shchukin to act freely and boldly in his role. At the same time, however, Shchukin never forgot that

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\* M. Romm, *Conversations About Cinema*, Moscow, 1964, p. 30 (in Russian).

he was portraying a major political figure, thinker, and philosopher, a man of enormous will and a passionate revolutionary.

Shchukin's work on the role was made even more difficult by the fact that he was physically unlike Lenin. The director and the actor made the only decision possible—not to strive for total external similarity (although this is very important, too), not to copy Lenin's mannerisms, walk, or speaking voice (only a few characteristics of Lenin's pronunciation were retained), but to proceed from the essence of Lenin's character—what Lenin did or how he would have acted in given circumstances. This artistic principle—not to imitate, but to creatively reproduce—proved to be correct: although during the film's opening moments the viewer notices a certain lack of similarity between the prototype and the actor, he is soon entirely caught up by the emotional power and conviction of Shchukin's performance. And for many people, especially those who had not seen Lenin in real life, the image created by the actor becomes totally identified with the real Lenin.

From the very beginning of the film, Lenin is dominated by one thought only—to act! And this underlying theme in the role, noted above—the joyful, creative upsurge of all his inner forces, his striving towards struggle and the Revolution—found its highest expression in the film's final episodes, when the delegates to the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets rapturously greet their leader. This finale memorably expresses the theme of the triumph of history, the aesthetic ideal of Soviet cinema in the 1930s.

Shchukin was able to give a memorable performance as Lenin not only because he was a great actor, but because he was himself a vivid personality and had many fine human qualities. Shchukin worked at creating the role of Lenin with a deep sense of responsibility and understanding of the seriousness of his task. Alexei Kapler, the script-writer for *Lenin in October* recalls: 'Shchukin approached this role so carefully that the usual theatrical terms cannot be applied to what he did... His brilliant skill and professionalism disappeared in something

far more important—how he prepared himself inwardly, how he entered into a special frame of mind that he always maintained while playing Lenin.’ Actor Nikolai Plotnikov recalls: ‘When Shchukin was tired, he ceased to resemble Lenin because the energy of his role “dried up” in him.’

During his work on this role, Shchukin found his own particular details for conveying Lenin’s charm. His interpretation of the role became so firmly a part of the audience’s consciousness and the actor’s personal qualities merged so entirely with those of Lenin that for many viewers the figure of the revolutionary leader created by the actor became inseparable from the figure of Lenin himself.

As a result of *Lenin in October* some actors tended to imitate Shchukin’s performance as Lenin, rather than acting Lenin himself. Yet Shchukin’s performance as Lenin can very rightly be considered a vivid and inspiring example of service to art and the people for other actors. For instance, Romm recalled that working with that actor was for him ‘a lesson in actor-orientated directing, as well as a lesson in the art of acting. I can therefore proudly name Shchukin among my teachers.’\*

However, neither Shchukin’s depiction of Lenin nor the film as a whole can be regarded as an unqualified success. Above all, Lenin’s portrayal lacked consistency; the actor had not yet achieved total unity and freedom in his external interpretation of the role: his mannerisms and movements were somewhat inhibited. Nadezhda Krupskaya remarked that Shchukin sometimes seemed rather too fidgety and eccentric. But this can undoubtedly be attributed to newsreels which Shchukin consciously or rather unconsciously copied: at the time that Lenin was filmed, the speed of film was 16 frames per second. Perhaps the main drawback was that Shchukin’s interpretation of Lenin stressed his kindness and humanity, above all. This interpretation often made it difficult to believe that such a soft-hearted man could lead the broad popular

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\* M. Romm, *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

masses to a socialist revolution. In his second film, *Lenin in 1918*, Shchukin made Lenin firmer and more resolute, and his performance became much freer and more natural.

While *Lenin in October* can be considered an historical chronicle, *Lenin in 1918* (1939) was an historical drama which, as cinema historian N. Zorkaya observed, 'had a clear development and profound inner logic that determined the sequence and links between episodes and had an inflexible progress in its action'. This film presented Lenin, for the first time in the cycle of works about him in the theatre and cinema, as the subject of a dramatic conflict and a participant in all the major moments of the plot. Lenin lives and acts on the screen for nearly an hour and a half, and Shchukin occupies every moment of this time. The actor clearly feels more confident in his role in this film. Most important, he does not attempt to imitate Lenin, but genuinely lives in his role, as a result of which his similarity with the revolutionary leader is much greater in *Lenin in 1918*. Shchukin was able to penetrate deeply into Lenin's character, and to add new emotional touches making his performance more well-rounded and psychologically satisfying.

However, perhaps the greatest achievement of *Lenin in 1918* was that Shchukin succeeded in making Lenin's thought processes visible and made his words sum up the inner movement of his thought. This process is clearest in the political dialogues, in particular, and in the episode with the kulak. For the first time in the film Lenin meets an undisguised, irreconcilable enemy. Although this character is minor in terms of the plot, the film succeeds in showing him as an integral social type, and Lenin enters into a political struggle with an historically real and serious opponent. The conversation with the kulak takes place in the kitchen, and many film critics were disturbed by this scene's 'prosaic' background. Yet this scene was very important in many respects, and its social and political meaning extends beyond the film itself. It showed how vital a serious opponent is in disclosing the hero's character more fully on the screen.

*Lenin in 1918* takes one of the most complex periods in the life of the young Soviet republic—the summer of 1918. An intense struggle was in progress for the consolidation of Soviet power, a struggle against famine, economic devastation, intervention, and counter-revolution. The film subordinates all of this to the theme of the fierce class struggle taking place in the country. It was on this point that the film was influenced by certain dogmatic ideas that held sway in the late 1930s on such problems as ‘the Revolution and the intelligentsia’, ‘the people and their leaders’, etc. But if we remove this, due to the time in which the film was made, the film’s real significance—its reflection of the real historical necessity for a merciless struggle against the enemies of the Revolution—becomes clearer. The attitude towards counter-revolution and hostile elements and the understanding of the essence of revolutionary humanism are, in Sergei Eisenstein’s words, the ‘secondary’ theme of this film. This sub-theme acquires real tangibility in Lenin’s disagreement (the film shows this as more of a friendly admonition) with Gorky, who held abstractly humanist belief at the time. The film’s plot development affirms the right of the Revolution to a ‘Red terror’ in highly dramatic episodes of intense conflict in which the development of this theme is culminated and finds its profound historical justification in the assassination attempt on Lenin’s life by the Socialist Revolutionary Kaplan.

*Lenin in 1918* continued to search for a fuller treatment of the central character, a search begun in *Lenin in October*. The theme of Lenin’s inseparable link with the people, for instance, was further developed in the scene showing Lenin speaking at the Michelson Factory. This scene became one of the most important depictions of Lenin as an orator in a non-documental film. Another episode is also impressive. As the car bearing the injured Lenin moves through the crowd of workers, people step aside, but where the car has passed they do not close ranks again, leaving an empty space instead. ‘It is as if something has been removed from the crowd where



the car has passed through it. This empty space emphasises the crowd's total immobility and the episode's sorrowful, grief-stricken, static quality,'\* wrote Mikhail Romm.

But critics pointed up that in his conversations with Gorky in the film Lenin termed all intellectuals 'men of the past', and any pity for them 'very harmful'. The film's prejudiced attitude towards the intelligentsia is obvious. In fact, Lenin had repeatedly stressed the need to draw specialists and intellectuals into the task of socialist construction and to make thorough use of their knowledge and experience.

In 1938 another film about Lenin was released, *Man With a Gun*, directed by Sergei Yutkevich from the play of the same name by Nikolai Pogodin (who had also written a film-script entitled *November* from this play). The role of Lenin was entrusted to Maxim Shtraukh, who had recently played Lenin in the stage in Aleksandr Korneichuk's play, *Truth*. *Man With a Gun* began a long working friendship between Yutkevich and Shtraukh which lasted more than thirty years and gave Soviet cinema three films about Lenin: *Man With a Gun* (1938), *Stories About Lenin* (1958), and *Lenin in Poland* (1966).

*Man With a Gun* developed the figure of Lenin in a different way than did Kapler and Romm in their film, especially in its treatment of the theme 'Lenin and the people'. Sergei Yutkevich wrote that '...poetry, it seems to me, is the path that the Soviet artist should follow when the artistic task of showing a page of great history arises, and this path will prove to be the shortest one to the hearts of the Soviet people'\*\*.

In this film the most important thing for the script-writer and director was to subordinate the entire structure of the film to the Leninist theme, to link it with the destiny of all the characters, especially the fate of 'the man with a gun' — private

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\* M. Romm, Op. cit., pp. 194-95.

\*\* S. Yutkevich, 'Poetry is the Key (The Figure of Lenin in the Film *Man With a Gun*)', in the collection *On the Art of Film*, Moscow, p. 116 (in Russian).

Ivan Shadrin. The film deals with the Leninist thesis that the imperialist war must be turned into a civil war. To carry out their conception, Pogodin and Yutkevich chose the form of a parable about a peasant soldier. At the same time, the film was historically concrete and analytical.

In the film Lenin was made an organic part of the workers-peasants milieu, stirred to active participation in the Revolution. The director divided all the scenes in which Lenin appeared into six 'musical' phrases, each one of which had its own tonality. For instance, the theme of the first 'phrase' — Lenin writing his appeal 'To All the Working People' — was Lenin's idea. The last episode, in which Lenin speaks to the workers at the Putilov Factory, can be seen as less a summing-up of the film than as a striving towards the future, the birth of a new day that was bringing to the world the realisation of mankind's great dream. 'In this final scene,' wrote Yutkevich, 'we set ourselves the creative task of synthesising everything that the actor had created during his work on the role: this final coda was to interweave and resolve all the melodies, resounding once again in a single theme.' \*

The film contains only one full-scale episode in which Lenin appears: Lenin's accidental meeting in the Smolny corridor with private Ivan Shadrin, one of the millions for whom the Revolution was carried out. Yet each of the film's plot developments were internally linked with Lenin. The destiny of Shadrin, who travels from the trenches of the imperialist war with a letter for Lenin, and then goes to the Civil War front, is essentially the realisation of the Leninist ideas permeating the entire film.

The scene of the meeting between Lenin and Shadrin begins with a very humorous situation: the soldier does not know with whom he is speaking. But the meaning of this conversation is extremely important for both men: Lenin needs to know the mood of the popular masses in order to bring them to the

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\* Ibid.

defence of the Revolution; and, as a result of this conversation, Shadrin decides for himself that he is ready to go and fight for the land and a new life. In this scene Lenin and Shadrin speak as equals, they are concerned and brought close to each other by their 'contact with the Revolution and the destinies of the people involved in it',\* as well as simply their contact with each other.

The figure of Lenin, like the entire film, is resolved in this same 'poetic key'. Shtraukh understood that no one could grasp this role in its entirety, for it is inexhaustible, and so he found his 'dominant chord' for the role in Lenin's thought. The actor conveyed Lenin's thinking process so well and delved so deeply into his inner world that Boris Shchukin said after viewing Shtraukh's performance as Lenin in the theatre: 'Shtraukh has a real and subtle sense of the role that is uniquely his own. Strictly speaking, Maxim Shtraukh has a lofty right — that of his heart and erudition — to play this major role. He has what is most important — an inner perception of the role.'

Shtraukh did not strive for a naturalistic external similarity to Lenin, he did not try to simply copy his mannerisms, poses, and intonations. 'The problem of external similarity,' Yutkevich wrote at the time, 'can only be resolved in this way: let the actor seem physically unlike Lenin in the first 10-15 metres, but a real inner similarity will grow from one frame to the next and convince the audience, stir up their feelings, so that by the end of the film they will say "Yes, that's just how I imagined Lenin would be".' \*\* This was a bold resolution of the problem of external and internal similarity in playing Lenin.

These two films by Romm, *Lenin in October* and *Lenin in 1918*, and Yutkevich's *Man With a Gun* were the first in Soviet cinema to create a profound, truthful, and memorable depiction of Lenin. In their treatment of Lenin, these filmmakers affirmed the correct interpretation of this role: Lenin

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\* Ibid., p. 120.

\*\* Ibid., p. 117.

shown as being among the people, inseparably united with the people, and supported by the people's revolutionary activity. The development of socialist realism in Soviet cinema owed a great deal to these three films. In their own way they solved the major problem facing Soviet film-makers at the time—the problem of creating a positive hero, born of a new, revolutionary era. These films determined the basic creative principles underlying the image of Lenin. These principles were further developed in a number of films about Lenin in the 1960s and 1970s. The films by Romm and Yutkevich are very rightly regarded as classics of the Soviet cinema.

One of the best films about Lenin in the end of the 1950s was Yutkevich's *Stories About Lenin* (1958). Yutkevich's Lenin films form an artistic unity, but each of them bear the marks of the time in which they were made. This is true of the interpretation of the central character, as well as the writing of the film-script, and of the film's visual structure. *Man With a Gun* (1938), *Stories About Lenin* (1958), and *Lenin in Poland* (1966) are films that can be regarded as landmarks in the development of Soviet cinema and in the evolution of Yutkevich as a director.

*Stories About Lenin* synthesised all the best that had accumulated in Soviet cinema at the time. Unlike other films, in which Lenin had appeared in one or two episodes, essentially as a leader giving instructions or reading quotations from his speeches and theoretical writings, in Yutkevich's film Lenin was the central character, the subject of a dramatic situation (especially in the second novella). This main line in the script determined the interest in Lenin's inner world, the striving to penetrate into the depths of his character, to convey the integral quality of his nature.

The memoirs written by script-writer Evgeni Gabrilovich, *About the Past*, Yutkevich's book, *Poetry is the Key*, and the memoirs of Maxim Shtraukh about his work on the role of Lenin, *My Life's Work*, reveal the innermost aspects of their work together on films about Lenin. First and foremost, this

was a working friendship between fellow-thinkers united by the lofty and noble goal of depicting the leader of the Revolution on the screen. Later, this working friendship was to create yet another outstanding work about Lenin, *Lenin in Poland*.

*Stories About Lenin* is composed of two novellas. The first was written by script-writers Mikhail Volpin and Nikolai Erdman, and the second was the work of Evgeni Gabrilovich. In comparison with other films, there were many fundamentally new elements in this film. Unlike *Man With a Gun*, for instance, Lenin was not shown at turning-points in history, but before them (in the first novella), and after them (in the second novella), not as a government figure, but as seen from a more private, more human angle. This is particularly true of the second novella dealing with the last months of his life in his country house 'Gorki'.

*Stories About Lenin* showed the leader first and foremost as a man trying to understand and respond to the thoughts and feelings of the people around him. Unlike many other films of this period, Lenin spoke in unaffected, convincing language that touched the heart of every viewer, for his words contained the great truth. The underlying idea in the first novella, *Private Mukhin's Feat* was just that: to show how, under the influence of Leninist ideas and truth, a soldier defending the Provisional Government crossed over to the side of the Revolution.

However, the first novella was less successful than the second because its plot conflicts were insufficiently original, and the characters lacked depth. The approach to the Leninist theme in earlier films was repeated; the script for the first novella made it impossible to depict the leading characters in more than a sketchy fashion. The enemies were depicted in exactly the same way as they had been previously: they were all 'old acquaintances' from other films.

What was new in this film, what set it apart from other historical-revolutionary films of the same period, was its portrayal of Lenin himself. Shtraukh gave an unforgettable

performance. From the very first shots in which Lenin appears audiences were struck by the amazing naturalness of the actor's intonations, mannerisms, and facial plasticity. Director Yutkevich and cameraman Andrei Moskvina, who filmed the first novella, were entirely right in rejecting highly accentuated angles in depicting Lenin and, what is most important, gave the actor total freedom to move and breathe before the camera. They clearly strove to proceed not from external imitation, but from an inner comprehension of the hero's character. Shtraukh decisively rejected all clichés in playing Lenin (and over a twenty-year period a great many had been built up) and began to search for new possibilities, new touches. During the filming of *Stories About Lenin* (even after shooting had finished) Shtraukh kept up a correspondence with Yutkevich (although they lived in the same block of flats) because, as Shtraukh wrote in his memoirs, *My Life's Work*: 'I wanted to share with him my longing for, above all, a more detailed psychological treatment of the role.' These letters show how seriously and responsibly Shtraukh took his work.

The first story shows Lenin in his last hiding-place—in Razliv in the summer of 1917, when the Provisional Government had ordered his arrest and trial as 'a German spy'. But even at a time when he was unable to play a direct part in revolutionary activity, Lenin was inseparable from the political struggle: it was at this period that he wrote *The State and Revolution*. In his hide-out at Razliv he foresaw the future course of history. Yutkevich and Shtraukh were faced with a complex task—to convey by cinematic means Lenin's thought process and all that was taking place inside him. Poetic shots pass on the screen: Lenin on the shore of a lake looking into the distant clouds as if into the future, Lenin deep in thought over his manuscript. These scenes show metaphorically the bold flight of Lenin's ideas and give life to his thoughts about the revolutionary storm to come.

The second novella, *The Last Autumn*, told of Lenin's last few months in 'Gorki' outside Moscow. Unlike the first novella,

the second was shot in colour. The cameraman here was Evgeni Andrikanis, who replaced Moskvina due to the latter's failing eye-sight. For the first time in all the films about Lenin tragic elements appeared in this novella. During the last months of his life, Lenin was almost unable to speak (only his wife could understand him) and partially lost his power of movement. But the script-writers consciously rejected 'naturalism' in depicting Lenin's illness. Their rejection of slavish dependence on facts was the only decision possible: for this novella was not intended to arouse a feeling of pity that would have been inappropriate for Lenin, but a profound, sincere respect for the man who so courageously overcame the trials that fell to his lot.

Shtraukh did not portray Lenin as hopelessly ill (the viewers know this for themselves), but instead tried to convey Lenin's love of life, his optimism and inexhaustible will to struggle. Only a certain lack of freedom in his movements convey to the audience his real physical condition. The tragic elements were to be found in the situation itself and were expressed in the film by visual and sound effects that created the atmosphere and surrounding for the action. Shtraukh concentrated on expressing how Lenin overcame these tragic elements. And so, despite the sorrowful ending, the film resounded optimistically in its affirmation of life, and Lenin remained eternally alive in our memories.

When *Stories About Lenin* was released it produced sharp controversy about whether such a large degree of artistic license was permissible in portraying Lenin's life. The film contained more than a few factual inaccuracies. But the main focus of the arguments was one of the last scenes in which Lenin travels to Moscow and makes a speech at a factory political meeting. No such speech had taken place in reality, nor could it have taken place, due to Lenin's physical condition at the time. Once during that last autumn, though, he had gone to Moscow, spent some time in the Kremlin, and travelled about the city. Someone who had seen him at the time recalled:

'It was as if he was saying goodbye'. However, Lenin did not speak in public at this time.

It is very difficult to decide for or against artistic license in the interpretation of history. A work of art is not simply a list of events. The right of an artist to use a degree of license and to see historical facts in his own way hinges on whether the real content of the historical processes and events can be more deeply disclosed in this way on the screen. Most important, does artistic license help to express more vividly and fully the truth of a given character, do his 'invented' actions arise logically from the essence of his character?

Among the non-documental films about Lenin there are several that deal with his youth and early political activity.

Mark Donskoy's two films about Lenin, *A Mother's Heart* (1965) and *A Mother's Constancy* (1966) are the most successful screen treatments of Lenin's youth. These films formed a chronicle of sorts about the Ulyanov family. The main role was performed by Moscow Film Institute graduate Rodion Nakhapetov, an undoubtedly talented and lyrical actor, but lacking in artistic experience at the time. If we were to analyse his performance in detail, we would find a number of faults in it: the actor seems rather wooden and superficial and does not always succeed in giving the role an inner significance or psychological subtlety. Heavy make-up inhibits him. But we can say that Nakhapetov was able to convey his character's transition from being a teenager to young adulthood and to convey the young Lenin's showing inner maturity, avoiding an overly straightforward approach to this task. In both of Mark Donskoy's films Nakhapetov deals better with lyrical moments. True, this depended to a great extent on the way in which the scenes were constructed. In Lenin's very figure and manner of holding himself, the actor tried to convey his inner warmth, rather than harsh inflexibility — and this is only natural, for the actor is not playing the revolutionary leader, but above all a mother's son, which is how his mother



sees him even at the age of forty. Lenin appears in the film (especially in the first of the two films), as a rule, in episodes which figure his mother alongside him, and the audience sees him as if through his mother's eyes.

Mark Donskoy continued his work on Lenin's life in *Nadezhda*, dedicated to Lenin's wife and close associate—Nadezhda Krupskaya. Only a few particularly vivid episodes in Krupskaya's youth are reflected; the director gave the pride of place to the progressive Russian intelligentsia out of which outstanding people, future revolutionaries, came. Krupskaya meets the young Lenin at a clandestine revolutionary meeting and her destiny is decided.

Andrei Myagkov, an actor from Moscow's Art Theatre, performed the part of the young Lenin with great charm, tactfulness, and a sense of measure. He successfully conveyed such decisive traits in Lenin's character as his sharp, analytical mind (that of a professional revolutionary and political fighter), his conviction, and his passionate faith in a bright future for all of mankind. It was these traits that attracted Russia's progressive youth to Lenin, and later enabled him to take up leadership of the working-class's revolutionary movement.

The historical-revolutionary films of the 1960s and 1970s made by noted Soviet film-makers touched on current philosophical problems that were of concern to their contemporaries and tried to show not so much large-scale events as the main character's inner world, to penetrate into the far recesses of his mind: to convey by cinematic means not only ideas, but the process by which they develop—all this determined the level and form of Soviet cinema today. The best new films about Lenin and the Revolution made a significant contribution to the ideological and artistic progress of cinema. In films today Lenin is frequently portrayed in every-day settings, yet the artist's attention to the revolutionary leader and philosopher's inner world is all the more intense. Those films about Lenin, which made a consistent effort to peel away

layers of clichés that had accumulated about the historical past and tried resolutely to recreate the real truth and complexity of historical events, processes, and facts, have proved to be of permanent value. It was no accident that the public's opinion was attracted by Emmanuil Kazakevich's story *The Blue Notebook* and the film of the same name made from it by Lev Kulidzhanov. The searchings that took place during work on the film were fruitful and had a definite influence on the future development of the Leninist theme on the screen. It was also along these lines that script-writer Evgeni Gabrilovich, director Sergei Yutkevich, and actor Maxim Shtraukh worked in making their new film *Lenin in Poland* (a Russian-Polish co-production).

This film made a new and extremely important contribution to the treatment of Lenin's life on the screen. The script-writers' main virtue was that they did not follow the familiar path in portraying Lenin, a path on which, as Gabrilovich expressed it in his *About the Past*, 'there are not only cement mile-stones already, but traffic lights, as well.' Constant innovation is a distinctive trait in all Yutkevich's films about Lenin, including *Lenin in Poland*. The entire film is constructed as if around Lenin's inner monologue. Throughout the film his voice alone is heard on the narrative sound-track. The film-makers approached the main role in a new way and delved deep into Lenin's thought processes. The film sought its dramatic intensity in Lenin's inner world and thoughts, rather than in the conditions of his life. Lenin's powerful mind and ideas served as the focal point for the film-makers.

The many levels in the film's visual and intonational structure and overall design are joined less by plot, than by associational montage, which creates a complex counterpoint and organises the distinctive movement of Lenin's ideas in space and time. Lenin is not shown as the author of ready-made formulas and recipes, but rather in the process of searching and reflecting on a wide variety of topics. His thoughts, which take shape on the basis of Lenin's grasp of present life

and historical and social processes, turn towards the past, analyse the present, and strive towards the future.

The film's action takes place in August 1914, on the eve of and just after the outbreak of the First World War. Lenin is disturbed by the most fundamental problems in war and peace, and the destiny of the peoples drawn into this bloody war by imperialism. Lenin is far from Russia in a backwater of Austrian Poland, but in his heart and mind he is in his native country. A new revolutionary wave is rising in Russia, a wave that Lenin has long awaited and believed in. However, the war has whipped up a burst of chauvinism that delays the revolutionary explosion. At this time only Lenin and a handful of the hardest Bolsheviks spoke out against the predominant mood. It was at this moment that Lenin realised the need to turn the imperialist war into a civil war, a war for the triumph of the socialist revolution. 'So that's the way it is, gentlemen! You began this war, and we'll put an end to it!' are Lenin's closing words at the film's end.

The film's main success was without doubt Maxim Shtraukh's performance as Lenin. It is hard to even term his interpretation 'acting', for Shtraukh is totally natural and at ease in his role. Shtraukh wrote that he had doubts about whether he could handle a role which only gave him an inner monologue to rely on — that was new and unusual. Then, too, the actor had his age against him. The older he got, the younger he had to portray Lenin on the screen. At the time of *Lenin in Poland* Shtraukh was 63 years old, while Lenin was supposed to be 44! However, this twenty-year age gap was scarcely perceptible on the screen. Perhaps audiences noticed a discrepancy in the first few moments, but they quickly forgot it. Shtraukh's acting talent, temperament, and ability to penetrate and understand the role made audiences believe that they were looking at the real Lenin on the screen.

Shtraukh later recalled how Yutkevich, like a resourceful teacher, allowed him to improvise on the first day of shooting. This helped the actor to lose any creative inhibitions

he may have had. 'Improvisation,' wrote Shtraukh in his memoirs, 'made me more spontaneous in the role. It made the audience feel that it was all happening for the first time before their very eyes.' And that is the sense the film conveys to us: a feeling of confidence and inner freedom—the main features in Shtraukh's performance. The actor brilliantly carried out the film's main idea—to show the scale of Lenin's work (although Lenin was then cut off from direct political activity) and the historical importance of the revolutionary cause to which Lenin dedicated his life, and his humaneness. Shtraukh showed Lenin the political figure and the man as inseparably linked.

*Lenin in Poland* was a highly experimental film. For instance, the other figures in the film do not 'have a voice', which of course impoverishes them somewhat; the need to speak 'for everyone' sometimes creates the impression that Lenin is overly verbose. Only Shtraukh's artistic tactfulness, his ability to vary the intonation of Lenin's speech prevented this from becoming a major drawback to the film. *Lenin in Poland* did sometimes tend to directly 'illustrate' Lenin's inner monologue on the screen. A few episodes feel very artificial: for instance, Lenin sees two fallen soldiers on a bloody battle field—a Russian soldier and the Pole, Andrzej, to whom Lenin had not had time to explain the real meaning of the war. Basically, this scene is intended to illustrate Lenin's idea that all peoples share one destiny and have one enemy in common—imperialism. It is also perhaps a bit too sentimental to show Andrzej's 'Russian-style' engagement to Ulka, after which they break into the Polish national dance.

The film shows Lenin's arrest and solitary confinement on charges of 'spying on behalf of tsarist Russia'. This is a very 'free' treatment of historical fact. The film-makers needed this episode in order to focus attention on Lenin and his thoughts, and to show that solitude is a problem that simply does not exist for Lenin, because his thoughts are constantly with the people and the Party. In fact, Lenin was held in a cell

with other prisoners whose 'crimes' were various: the majority were uneducated, down-trodden peasants and local Protestants who had spoken out against 'the powers of this world'. Lenin brought animation and courage into their midst. During visiting hours, he transmitted messages for them: a lawyer must be found for one prisoner, something must be done for another man's family, etc. Nadezhda Krupskaya wrote: 'Lenin recalled his legal practice in Shushenskoye among the peasants, whom he helped out of all kinds of predicaments, and he set up an improvised "legal counselling office" in prison, wrote petitions, etc.'\* All this gave Lenin rich material for his later social and political conclusions.

The film-makers were right, of course, as artists—rather than as historians—to deviate in this way from historical fact, especially in that this episode did not distort the real meaning of this period in Lenin's life. But, on the other hand, they may have passed up an opportunity to shed further light on Lenin's indivisible link with the people.

*July Sixth*, a film directed by Yuly Karasik from a play of the same name by Mikhail Shatrov (who also wrote the film-script), was released in the late 1960s. Like *Lenin in Poland*, this film made a major contribution to the screen treatment of Lenin's life and work. It had a firm factual basis, and these facts were re-created on the screen with the aid of all the artistic means at the disposal of the cinema. The film-makers reconstructed the historical events of one of the tensest days in the life of the young Soviet state—July 6, 1918—the day when the left-wing Socialist Revolutionaries came out openly against the achievements of the Revolution, and the very existence of the new state depended on the decisive response made by Lenin and his Party comrades.

The film's composition and its development of this theme were determined by the events that took place on this day.

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\* N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1959, p. 280.

All the characters in the film were real participants in these events. This created the film's severe poetics, which were close to documental objectivity and accuracy, and gave rise to the film's stylised visual aspect, which was meant to resemble a Civil War newsreel.

*July Sixth* disclosed the real and highly complex disposition of political forces, when the outcome of the struggle between the Bolshevik Party and the S.R. traitors depended on many factors and demanded an intense effort, fortitude, and restraint from Lenin and the Bolsheviks — qualities that are also needed today, making the historical episode interpreted on the screen seem a behest to the new generation of revolutionaries in their struggle.

In reply to a request from the Institute of Brain Research to describe Lenin, Nadezhda Krupskaya pointed out one of his character traits: 'His usual, dominant mood was one of intense concentration.'

It was this concentration that served as the dominant note in Yuri Kayurov's performance as Lenin in this film. He was particularly convincing in conveying Lenin's distinctive concentration, demanded by the sharp and dramatic situation on which the film was based. Lenin is depicted here primarily as a political figure, Party leader, and head of the state. The actor stresses Lenin's extreme presence of mind, wisdom, resolution and energetic reactions during this sharp political struggle.

The film's action encompasses one twenty-four-hour period. Perhaps the main actor's chief contribution to the tradition of playing Lenin was that he did not show Lenin's character and actions to be based on 'unshakeable confidence', a very familiar trait in earlier films about Lenin. In *July Sixth* Lenin has no ready solutions, rather he intensely thinks and searches for the correct way out of the situation at hand. His thoughts and hesitations, spoken aloud, take shape before our very eyes and enable us to understand the intensity of Lenin's thought and psychological condition at the time. The triumph of Lenin

and the Bolshevik Party—the subject of *July Sixth*—is all the more impressive in that it was achieved in a tense struggle with a truly strong and intelligent opponent.

The leader of the left-wing S.R.s—Maria Spiridonova—had a complicated, tragic life. The Revolution was everything to her, but her errors led her first into the opposition camp, then forced her to speak out openly against the Revolution. In February, 1918 Spiridonova still adhered to Lenin's view that it was necessary to conclude the Treaty of Brest, but in July she spoke out against it. When she did not succeed in convincing the Bolsheviks verbally, she led an S.R. revolt aimed at seizing power, approved the assassination of the German ambassador Mirbach, and agreed to the arrest of Felix Dzerzhinsky. Spiridonova's tragedy arose from her sincerity, her fanatic belief in her own rightness and the necessity of her actions; however, although she appealed to people to give their lives for the Revolution, in fact she betrayed its very cause.

One of the film's most critical scenes depicts the meeting of the Fifth All-Russia Congress of the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Soldiers', and Red Army Deputies, which debated the resolution to accept the Brest Peace Treaty. The first to speak was Spiridonova. Her demagogic speech appears to take account of facts, the real situation, the objective historical moment. By seizing on individual facts and breaking their real links, Spiridonova represents the situation in such a way that it would seem she and her supporters are expressing the real interests of the people and the Revolution. Spiridonova is a fiery, experienced speaker, but calculating in the effects her tone, words, and gestures produce. At first she convinces the Congress and carries it along with her point of view. Only Lenin's genius, wisdom, authoritativeness, and logic based on truth were able to triumph over such a powerful political opponent in this critical situation.

Kayurov acts this scene with great restraint, without resorting to a single overly familiar gesture or pose of Lenin's. It was

not Lenin's external mannerisms that were most important when he spoke in public. The power of his public speaking was to be found in his truthfulness, sincerity, iron-clad logic, and high intelligence. In *July Sixth* the actor tries to convey — behind the speaker's outer calm — the depth and power of Lenin's thought, and its deep effect on his listeners' hearts and minds. Lenin analysed the historical situation proceeding from an accurate understanding of the people's fundamental interests, and he convinced the Congress that the Bolshevik Party was the true defender of the Revolution's interests.

The left-wing Socialist Revolutionaries claimed they were ready to do anything for the sake of the Revolution, even 'jump into the bonfire of world revolution'. 'Great goals are unattainable without great sacrifices', one of the left-wing S. R.s, Kolegaev said to Lenin. Lenin angrily replied: 'I know of only one great goal — people's happiness. Not abstract people, but those same people you are ready to sacrifice!' Lenin's reply showed clearly the humanism and great truth of the Revolution that was indeed carried out for mankind's happiness.

The theme of the unbreakable link between the Bolshevik Party and the people, the deep historical roots of the Revolution, and the profound interests of millions of working people in its destiny was dealt with in *July Sixth* without huge crowd scenes. Working-class Moscow, on which Lenin relied in his struggle with the S.R.s, was barely shown on the screen, yet its presence was felt in the film from beginning to end. There is one episode that creates the strong impression of the truly enormous scale of the people's struggle to defend the Revolution: at the height of the dramatic events, when the tension has become almost unbearable, the Bolsheviks issue an appeal to the Moscow workers to mobilise against the S.R. revolt. The screen shows a dark, crowd-filled square. Torch-light illuminates people's faces at random. In the distant semi-darkness Yakov Sverdlov can be made out, saying that Communists must go out into the whole of Moscow and into the



factories to explain the critical importance of the political situation and stir up the people to defend the Revolution.

This episode ends in a very impressive manner. At the request of the Bolshevik Party delegates from the Fifth Congress of Soviets go to speak to the people. Familiar and unfamiliar faces are shown on the screen. Among them are Bubnov, Lunacharsky, Inessa Armand, and Menzhinsky. Their voices are excited, and their words are very different, but their subject is the same. They speak with passionate conviction of the justness of the revolutionary cause and their intense desire for its triumph. The emotional power of this episode is so great that audiences even today feel as though they are participating directly in the historical events shown on the screen, and this is proof of the ideological and artistic virtues of *July Sixth*.

Films made in the various Soviet republics—the Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic republics, the Caucasian republics, and Central Asia—also made their contribution to the tradition of films about Lenin.

The figure of Lenin is a lofty ideal of the positive hero, today's hero, which film-makers have tried to portray on the screen. The best films about Lenin show the ideological growth and creative maturity of Soviet film-makers, the vast reach of their artistic strivings, and that their success is founded not only on genuine talent and professional skill, but also on their personal convictions, profound civil feeling, and ideological maturity.

Soviet cinema is at the forefront of an ideological struggle that has lost none of its force today, it is carrying out an important ideological and artistic mission, and it is educating honest people throughout the world to be internationalist in spirit and display solidarity in their struggle. The best films about Lenin are political films that have retained their topicality today.

The Leninist theme in Soviet cinema is in constant development. The inexhaustible nature of Lenin's personality, charac-

ter, and activity, and his grandeur continue to reveal broad possibilities for creative activity for a new generation of Soviet film-makers. There is always something left to discover on this path. The Soviet cinema will continue to make films about Lenin's life.

The problem of the historical-revolutionary film today is not just an internal cinematic one. A product of the Soviet cinema, the historical-revolutionary film has become a part of cinema throughout the world and a focus for ideological discussion. The past in its true historical aspect does not always suit everyone. While *Battleship 'Potemkin'*, *Lenin in October*, *The Baltic Deputy*, and other Soviet historical-revolutionary films are received with great interest and a sense of participation by millions of film-goers who dream of the world's renewal, reactionary forces fill cinema screens with a continuing stream of historical falsifications showing the October Revolution and history in general in a distorted light. That is why (although not only for this reason, of course) progressive film-makers regard films about the past, historical films, as topical and extremely necessary. And so, when director Vladimir Motyl makes a film at Lenfilm Studios about the Decembrists and the feat performed by their wives, or director Timofei Levchuk at Dovzhenko Studios, together with writer Aleksandr Levada, makes a film about a family of Ukrainian intellectuals—a writer-father, Mikhail Kotsyubinsky, his son, Red Army commander Yuri Kotsyubinsky, and the people around them, or when a joint Soviet-Finnish production is made, entitled *Trust*, in which the role of Lenin is acted by Kirill Lavrov, this is not just an artistic phenomenon, but a fierce political struggle against those who would falsify history. The Soviet historical-revolutionary film, one aspect of which is represented by films about Lenin's life and activity, continues to struggle against historical falsification, the dehumanising of man, and the preaching of skepticism, despair, and indifference.

## THE PEOPLE'S MEMORY

### 1.

During the years of peaceful construction the Soviet people were inspired by labour feats and self-sacrificing heroes who fought for Soviet power, as well as by patriots of the distant past whose feats and wisdom strengthened their native homeland.

On the eve of the Second World War, art referred more and more frequently to history. The working people of the world's first socialist country displayed a growing interest in their native roots. The most outstanding Soviet directors—Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Petrov, and Savchenko—made a whole series of important historical films: *Aleksandr Nevsky*, *Peter the Great*, *Minin and Pozharsky*, *Suvorov*, *Bogdan Khmel'nitsky*, and others.

Maxim Gorky once remarked that a man who does not know the past cannot understand the true meaning of the present or the purpose of the future. Historical films, which are a means of artistic cognition of the past, were needed by the people—the builders of a new, socialist society.

Although they drew on material from the past, historical films had contemporary significance, too. This does not mean that Eisenstein, Pudovkin, and Petrov 'revised' or 'modernised' history. The principles underlying the Soviet historical film have nothing in common with the traditions of bourgeois art which, in Marx's words, 'in place of a man from the past always substitutes an average man from a later date with a consciousness from a later era'. Historical truth is the main task that Soviet film-makers set themselves when they depicted a given historical epoch in tangible detail, as well as showing its internal links with the modern world.

The focal point of Soviet historical films in the 1930s was unfailingly occupied by outstanding historical figures—Peter the Great, Aleksandr Nevsky, Suvorov, or Bogdan Khmel-

nitsky — who, interacting with the popular masses, concentrate in themselves the meaning of their age, its complexities and contradictions.

With their knowledge of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, which helped them understand the laws of social development, Soviet film-makers were able to 'put themselves into' various historical eras and discover their significance for our own century: the thirteenth century and the struggle against the German knights which ended in the victory on Chudskoye Lake (*Aleksandr Nevsky*), the early seventeenth century, when the people rebelled and drove Polish interventionists from the Russian land (*Minin and Pozharsky*), the mid-seventeenth century and the Ukrainian people's heroic struggle against the Polish gentry, with the union between the Ukraine and Russia (*Bogdan Khmelnitsky*), the early eighteenth century — the complex era of Peter the Great with the Russian victory over the Swedish armies and the opening gained to the Baltic Sea (*Peter the Great*), and the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with the outstanding Russian military victories under Suvorov's leadership (*Suvorov*).

The brilliant cycle of historical films made in the late 1930s opened with *Peter the Great* (1937-1939), directed by Vladimir Petrov in close cooperation with Alexei Tolstoy. This film — massive in scope, boldly conceived in artistic terms, and filled with brilliant performances was an unqualified success of the pre-war cinema.

As a depiction of an historical era, *Peter the Great* was intended to correspond to historical truth in every detail — from the events that served as the basis of the narrative to the costume details.

Alexei Tolstoy's novel was the first fictional attempt to treat the era of Peter the Great with its sharp social conflicts truthfully and on a large scale. Adhering to the literary original and filling it out in some respects, the film did not attempt to idealize Peter the Great. The film-makers kept in mind Lenin's concise appraisal of Peter's activity, that in speeding

up the Westernization of barbaric Russia, he did not hesitate to use barbaric means against barbarism\*. It was no secret that Peter — 'that autocratic landowner' — was in irresolvable conflict with the people on whose backs Petersburg was built. Yet the film's major accent is rather different. In struggling against internal enemies (above all with the devious and reactionary boyars and an opposition headed by his son, Alexei), Peter aided the progress of the Russian state, of Russian science and the arts. His struggle with external enemies was not conducted simply for the glory of the Russian army. In the final analysis it saved the people from a foreign yoke, made it possible to preserve national independence and sovereignty.

Peter was a commander and soldier, a builder and skilled workman, and an outstanding state figure who realised the country's historical needs and made it the purpose of his life to cut new paths for Russia no matter what the cost. Director Vladimir Petrov and actor Nikolai Simonov showed him in just this light — as a figure larger than life. Confidence, purposefulness, and enthusiasm always dominated Peter's character. He was indefatigable in battle. Physically enormous, he was still agile and energetic. The Tsar's angry glance alternated quickly with the workman's broad, open smile.

In creating their distinctive characterisation of Peter the Great, the film-makers did not neglect the tradition of the 'senior' arts. Peter is sometimes reminiscent of the Falconet's statue *Bronze Horseman*, as well as of the statesman portrayed in Valentin Serov's famous painting, and the verbal portrait created by Pushkin in his long poem *Poltava*.

The film does not, however, begin on a triumphant note. The first scene is of the defeat of Peter's army at Narva. An abandoned cannon, an overhung sky covered by a snowstorm and white smoke from cannon fire. Russian soldiers are retreating in confusion, leaving the cannons behind. Peter is gloomy

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\* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 340.

and deep in thought, but not down-cast. His mind is filled with thoughts of the glory of Russian arms and the grandeur of his homeland.

The film progresses in strict accordance with historical facts. One episode shows the successful taking of the fortress at the mouth of the Neva River. Another shows the founding of St. Petersburg. The Battle of Poltava and the victory of the Russian army, which was comprised of all the social classes (isn't this proof of the positive nature of Peter's reforms?). The battle at sea and the conclusion of the Treaty of Niestadt, which signalled the victory of Russia and gave it the firm right to an opening to the Baltic Sea. The film's plot was based on major moments in Peter's activity, which coincided with turning points in Russian history. The history of the state was closely interconnected with the main character's life, and in a broader sense with the people's destiny. Alexei Tolstoy wrote: 'The central idea of our film was to show the might of the great Russian people and the indefatigable nature of their constructive spirit.' The large-scale battle and crowd scenes were not just a background in *Peter the Great*, but the very basis of its composition, giving the film an epic sweep. The people's universal patriotic fervour led to Poltava and decided the outcome of the Northern War.

Soviet film-makers regard historical themes as patriotic themes. Recreating heroic moments in our country's past by cinematic means, the best historical films from the pre-war years educated the Soviet people to fight for their country's interests. In the threatening atmosphere of the late 1930s, vivid stories of our ancestors' feats helped to mobilise all forces for the defence of our homeland.

'Our theme is patriotism,' was Sergei Eisenstein's first note about his conception of the film *Aleksandr Nevsky*, on which he began work in 1938 together with writer P. Pavlenko and director D. Vassiliev.

War was already in the air, and the border conflict at Lake Khasan, provoked by Japanese militarists, had already occurred.

In Europe fascist Germany had already swallowed Austria and Czechoslovakia, had fixed its gaze on Poland, and was preparing to invade the Soviet Union. In this atmosphere a film about an outstanding Russian state figure and military commander who had defeated the spiritual ancestors of the German fascists seven hundred years ago had a very contemporary ring about it.

In the mid-thirteenth century nearly all Russia was under the oppressive Tatar yoke. Only the North-East led by Novgorod the Great remained free, and the Teutonic knights, taking advantage of Russia's weakness, had their sights set on it.

'A great tragedy is threatening us — great men are needed,' said Aleksandr Nevsky.

The people rose up in one great surge, resolved to defend their native land to their last breath.

The *voevods* forgot their internecine disagreements and battles. There was a larger cause at hand — Russia was caught between two enemies.

The decisive battle took place on the ice of Chudskoe Lake. Eisenstein gave a large place to this episode in the film, showing this famous thirteenth-century battle with true epic sweep, as told in the *byliny*.

April 5, 1242 — Chudskoe Lake was covered over with smooth, thick layer of ice. Before the battle began, Aleksandr Nevsky set out the Russian army's strategy and tactics: the Germans were heavier, and the ice was not yet firm, and it would give way beneath them. The Teutonic knights, as we know from history, fought in a wedge formation. The Russian army would take the brunt of their wedge-attack, then close in on the Teuton hordes from both sides and annihilate them.

The enemy advanced across the ice. The horsemen's white tunics merged with the icy white expanse. The Russian army stood opposite them. The time had come and they raised their lances. They advanced and took the first blow. The battle was on. The knights were killed with swords,

axes, and clubs, and dragged off their horses with hooks.

The film showed the rising tempo of the battle, from individual, hand-to-hand combat to fierce pursuit of the fleeing enemy. Aleksandr Nevsky's prophecy came true—the ice gave way beneath the 'heavy Germans' and the lake swallowed up the enemy.

The film's idea is expressed in Aleksandr Nevsky's memorable, prophetic words: 'He who comes to us with the sword shall perish by the sword. The Russian land lives and shall always live by this.' During the Second World War these words had the force of a sacred oath for Soviet soldiers.

The scene in which Novgorod the Great welcomes its living and dead heroes, its glorious soldiers, is a memorable one. The enemy will come no more to their gates. 'If I am alive, I shall fight them myself,' Aleksandr Nevsky said, 'and if I die, I shall show my sons how to fight.'

This was a great moral victory, a victory of the spirit. It was also a strategic military victory, a victory of the mind: Aleksandr Nevsky was the first to find a means against the unbeatable Teutonic 'wedge' in the Russian 'pincers'.

The centre of the film is occupied by the monumental figure of Aleksandr Nevsky, played by film and stage actor Nikolai Cherkasov. Was Aleksandr Nevsky, as he conceived him, faithful to the real historical figure? That is a difficult question to answer: a detailed portrait of Nevsky has not come down to us from ancient times, documental iconography has not been able to fully depict the distant thirteenth century. We can, however, say with confidence that the external appearance and mannerisms of the character created by Cherkasov and Eisenstein are convincing to audiences and correspond to their conceptions of the legendary commander. Fearless and powerful, frank and clear, wise and just—that was undoubtedly Aleksandr Nevsky. The actor rejected a detailed characterisation, preferring to give him bold contours, a generalised and elevated character. Aleksandr Nevsky lacks 'an everyday feel' on the screen, he seems to have come straight out of legend,



a great and monumental figure, yet simple and accessible at the same time. All the hero's traits, his entire characterisation ('prince', 'diplomat', 'commander') merges with one concept — 'patriot'. Nevsky as played by Cherkasov embodies the people's wisdom, their unbreakable spirit. The actor conveys all this in his clear gaze, in his speech, which is concise and to the point, and in his broad and confident gestures. Aleksandr Nevsky heads the popular masses: during the decisive battle with the enemy he moves from one spot to another concentrating in himself the people's inflexible will, their mighty, patriotic upsurge.

Two men of Herculean strength — Vassily Buslai (acted by N. Okhlopkov) and Gavril Oleksich (acted by A. Abrikosov) — stand on opposite sides of Aleksandr Nevsky. One is the very embodiment of boldness, the other is a balanced and wise warrior. Both clearly realise their duty to Novgorod and the people. These are no imaginary characters, they were created out of the material of Novgorod *byliny* and chronicles.

The film shows the struggle against the Teutonic knights as a broad popular movement. Artisans, fishermen, hunters, and peasants fought alongside Aleksandr Nevsky, Gavril Oleksich, Vassily Buslai and their troops. The theme of the Russian people's uprising is consistently shown in the figure of Ignat (played by D. Orlov).

Indeed, patriotism was the major theme in *Aleksandr Nevsky*, giving the film its enormous emotional power. In drawing on the distant thirteenth century, Eisenstein set himself the task of not just reproducing the era in its smallest details, but of grasping its essence, and emphasizing those moments in its history that had significance for the contemporary world. 'Historical truth is not the same as historical naturalism. In its grasp of history, socialist realism is very far from reproducing a mass of facts and individual incidents devoid of interpretation, which is characteristic of all forms of naturalism.

'What is more, a realistic picture of a phenomenon can even

be in contradiction to a naked mechanical exposition of the facts.' \* Eisenstein's judgement was affirmed in the structure of *Aleksandr Nevsky* and in many of its elements.

Eisenstein, for instance, did not directly copy thirteenth-century language, which has an archaic ring today, or stylise the film after icons and frescoes. Composer Sergei Prokofiev rejected thirteenth-century chants, which are alien to current musical perceptions. All of this was right in terms of the film. Our ancestors came alive before our eyes without 'stylizing'. The Teutonic theme was developed as we, who live in the twentieth century, imagine it, not strictly following thirteenth-century canons.

The film-score was not just a background, but an important element in the whole. It gave the action an epic tonality, a feeling of breadth, a universal sense, perhaps even a somewhat operatic quality. Eisenstein consciously decided on this style and subordinated the visual aspect of the film and the actors' performances to it.

Treating a distant historical episode had another aspect closely linked with contemporary life. The film disclosed the origins of German militarism. The Teutonic and Livonian Orders arose in Jerusalem and from the very beginning had demagogically linked Christianity and religion in general with the most blatant German nationalism and the extermination or enslavement of whole tribes and peoples. These evil knights performed their dark deeds garbed in white tunics adorned with large crosses. This is the way they were shown in the film, although white is traditionally associated with moral purity. Seven hundred years later the fascist descendants of the Crusaders — 'God is with us' engraved on their belt-buckles — burned millions of people alive in concentration camp ovens.

The Russian people's historical past also became an object of close attention by another outstanding director — Pudovkin —

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\* S. Eisenstein, *Selected Articles*, Moscow, 1956, p. 52 (in Russian).

who, together with Mikhail Doller, made the film *Minin and Pozharsky* in 1939, and *Suvorov* in 1940.

*Minin and Pozharsky* takes us back to the early seventeenth century, an epoch that has earned the name 'the Time of Discord' in history. The basis of the script written by Victor Shklovsky was his own documental story, *Russians in the Seventeenth Century*.

1610. The Russian throne was experiencing harsh difficulties. Taking advantage of the confusion, Polish and Swedish armies were pillaging the country and envisaged its eradication as a state, planning to turn it into nothing more than 'a geographical concept' and make the Russian people into slaves.

The Russian princes prefer to come to terms with the foreigners rather than act together with their serfs. A 'Time of Discord' had truly begun, the end of Russia had come. A Polish hireling ruled the Kremlin, the so-called 'False Dmitry'.

At this critical moment the people began to act as an unconquerable force. The organiser of the popular troops which, with the support of the peasant movement, succeeded in expelling the invaders in 1612, was Kozma Minin, and their military commander was Dmitry Pozharsky.

The film showed them as true popular heroes. Minin (acted by A. Khanov) comes from humble origins, he is a modest tradesman from Nizhny Novgorod. But his intelligence is already well known. At a difficult time for his homeland, he takes on leadership of the patriotic struggle.

'Not just for our own city, for Nizhny Novgorod alone, but for the whole of the Muscovite state... How can we care so much for our own possessions, a few odds and ends, and not care for our native land?' Kozma Minin's voice rings out on the market square. 'We are laying down the lives of our wives and children... our own lives, too... We shall sacrifice our lives...'

And the people rebel. The landed people of Novgorod give the people's troops 'a third of all their income, whatever it may be'. Money and men flow to Minin from all the cities

and villages for the army. Everywhere arms were struck and cannons made. Troops several thousand men strong gathered in Yaroslavl. Prince Dmitry Pozharsky (played by B. Livanov) is chosen *voevoda* 'of all the land'.

On August 24-25 an historic battle took place near Moscow. The Russian troops fought fiercely. The cannon and harquebuses, for which Minin had longed, beat off the furious attacks by the invaders. The sun went down in a cloud of smoke. The dragoons crossed the Moscow River. Minin attacks the enemy's rear, while Pozharsky attacks the flank. The enemy troops and their mercenaries were shattered and flee in panic. Moscow's Kremlin—the heart of Russia—was also soon emptied of the interventionists.

The film showed the peasant volunteer troops in an interesting manner, and closely followed the fate of Roman (B. Chirkov).

The struggle was not only waged against external enemies, the Polish interventionists, but against internal enemies as well. The movement of national liberation merged with Russia's first peasant war. Roman fought both the Poles and his own oppressor, Prince Orlov. The patriot Roman and Orlov, who is on the enemy side, fight to the death. The peasant's victory has a symbolic meaning for it reinforces the people's historical rightness in their battle against their oppressors.

The film was made with scrupulous attention to historical truth by artists who had a scholarly knowledge of the era.

'There was very little material available on Minin's character,' Victor Shklovsky writes. 'We used everything, even photographs showing the opening of Minin's grave: the coffin had been hewn out of a single oak trunk and it contained a giant with the high forehead of a thinker.'\*

Red Square was shown as it was in the early seventeenth century. After seeing the film, audiences knew what the people of Novgorod donated for their troops and how cannons were

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\* Victor Shklovsky, *Forty Years*, Moscow, 1965, p. 188 (in Russian).

loaded over three centuries ago. These details did not weigh down the film's central patriotic theme, but made it more tangible and real.

Just before the outbreak of the war, Pudovkin made another historical film in which military strategy and tactics and comparisons between different military schools and doctrines were dealt with as if the film-makers were military specialists. This film was about the famous Russian commander, Aleksandr Suvorov. During their work on the film, Pudovkin, script-writer G. Grebner, and actor N. Cherkasov, an actor from the Moscow Dramatic Theatre (not to be confused with famous Leningrad actor, N. K. Cherkasov) discovered a great deal that was new in the character of this outstanding man, in many respects a man ahead of his time. Suvorov's military ideas were unquestionably the most advanced of his time and enabled him to win brilliant victories on the battlefield; their significance also extended to many other areas of life. Suvorov disproved—both theoretically and practically, on the battlefield—the Prussian system dominant at the time, which was based on the most inflexible discipline and aimed at turning the soldier into an automatic executor of commands. The soldier became a 'mere mechanism, a specified article'. Even his physical movements were unnatural, and any independence was totally excluded.

Suvorov's principle was entirely different. The soldier was to know the purpose of the operation and the meaning of the manoeuvre, he was to act flexibly, adapt to the circumstances, to local conditions, show initiative and ingenuity. This great commander knew the value of the moral factor and the army's fighting spirit in war.

As a military commander, Suvorov combined 'the wisdom of age' with 'the bravery and fearlessness of youth'. He was always trim and fit, light and agile on his feet. He could not stand verbosity, which he considered a sign of imprecise thinking. The director and main actor accentuated one more interesting trait in Suvorov's character: 'The distance between

his thoughts, feelings, and actions was always short and direct... He immediately and resolutely acted on his inner decisions...'

Suvorov's famous book, *The Science of Victory*, the fruit of forty years' experience, was written in a very concise manner, in an aphoristic style. That was the way he actually spoke in life, and his orders were framed in this style, as well: 'Choose a hero for yourself and follow in his footsteps. Catch up to him. Overtake him. Glory to you.'

The Prussian military school perfected its methods of influencing the soldier, of making him 'shut off his mind' and go into battle without fearing death, over many long years. Suvorov did not believe in these artificial methods, but in truth, straight-forwardness, frankness, and — most importantly — in patriotic enthusiasm. His attitude towards soldiers was based on truly humane principles.

The whole of *Suvorov* was based on this characterisation of the main figure. It contained no fanfare, no chain of brilliant victories, only a profound understanding of human psychology.

Of course, Pudovkin was not aiming to make a narrowly military film about this outstanding commander. His major purpose was to create a full-blooded characterisation of this historical hero (in this respect Pudovkin overcame a certain miscalculation in his previous film, which suffered from insufficient characterisation of Minin and Pozharsky). The military theme was not developed by means of overwhelming battle scenes with sensational pyrotechnical displays. This theme interests Pudovkin in that Suvorov's personality was most clearly shown in this sphere.

The script-writers chose events from the last stage of Suvorov's life, the Italian and Swiss campaigns, and the famous crossing of the Alps. Suvorov was then seventy years old. He was a respected commander and his sometimes strange behaviour at court, even with Paul I, were regarded as just an old man's eccentricities. In fact, however, it shows his profound contempt for the court's devious ways, rigidness, and servility.

Remember Suvorov's scraping bow to the elegant-liveried lackey and his sarcastic explanation: 'Today a lackey, tomorrow a baron, then perhaps a duke or minister of some sort... Grovelers are getting ahead fast these days.'

N. Cherkasov accentuated Suvorov's eccentric traits, yet showed the great courage of a man who never bowed his head before anyone which lay beneath these eccentricities. All the more so before the feeble-minded Tsar Paul I with his Prussian ideas who was Suvorov's main enemy. When he encountered opponents (Paul I or the various devious 'allies' he met during his campaigns), Suvorov was shown even more clearly as a patriot whose thoughts were totally focused on Russia and its eternal glory.

'My life and death belong to Russia,' Suvorov said to Emperor Paul. Paul is satisfied, because he naively believes that he is Russia. But he is wrong, as was the pre-revolutionary sculptor who depicted Suvorov protecting the tsarist throne with his shield (as well as the Polish crown and the crown of the Austrian emperor!). For Suvorov Russia was its people and soldiers.

Although it focused attention on the central figure, the film still maintained the basic principle of the Soviet historical film. The people were shown to be the major force in the historical process. The people's mind and will were embodied in the concrete person of this brilliant commander. Suvorov is presented in the film through the eyes of the people and his soldiers, who see him—a truly national hero—as the embodiment of their best qualities.

On the very eve of the war, in April 1941, the film *Bogdan Khmel'nitsky* was released, an epic about the Ukrainian people's heroic past. This film came into being as the result of the collaboration of Ukrainian playwright A. Korneichuk and Ukrainian director I. Savchenko.

The setting is the mid-seventeenth century. The Ukraine is suffering under the yoke of Polish invaders. The people pay with their blood and back-breaking labour, with poverty

and humiliation for the merry and carefree life of their 'most honoured' Polish overlords.

Any sign of protest is eliminated with savage brutality. Disobedient 'serfs' are run through with stakes or burned alive.

The cup of the people's patience runs over. They rise up—a mighty, wrathful, and merciless force—and produce a hero, a man with a clear and far-sighted mind, enormous courage and resolution: Bogdan Khmelnytsky, the *hetman* of Zaporozhskaya Host.

The film begins with a scene showing the famous freemen's country, the very heart of the Ukrainian national liberation movement. Thousands of people united by their common hatred for their oppressors, their love of freedom, have taken refuge on the islands in Dnieper River where the Cossacks live.

Bogdan Khmelnytsky's decision to join forces with Russia was not a calculated political move made as a result of balancing the 'pros' against the 'cons'. He senses the deep spiritual fraternity between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples, their common moral ideals, destinies, and great tasks in world history. He understands that this is a real truth and, adhering to it, he is great in everything he does and beloved of his people.

In creating this historical epic, the film-makers were able to bring out the chief tendencies in this distant era. The patriotic ideas that inspired the film's heroes make them near and dear to us. Direct associations with contemporary life also arose: *Bogdan Khmelnytsky* was released soon after the people of the Western Ukraine joined with their brothers, when the Ukrainian people joined together in one state.

N. Mordvinov, the noted actor who played Bogdan Khmelnytsky, spoke thus of the chief 'formula' that guided him in his work: 'I wanted to create a romantic hero poeticised by the people, glorified in marvellous Ukrainian tales and legends, a severe and beautiful character, but alive in a contemporary sense. I wanted to bring to life the people's passionate, bright, creative spirit...'



The romantic principle about which Mordvinov speaks was very noticeable in the main character and throughout the film as a whole, realised in the spirit of Ukrainian folklore.

The actor created a truly epic character. We see a state figure, a commander, diplomat, Cossack, and comrade, as well as a husband whose wife has betrayed him. These psychological details do not, however, reduce Bogdan Khmelnytsky to a flat, everyday character, but are present only inasmuch as they contribute to making him a real, tangible person. The most important thing is the hero's thoughts about the people's happiness and the struggle to liberate the Ukraine from the Polish yoke.

The key to understanding the central character is given the first time we see Bogdan Khmelnytsky, when we are acquainted with the life of the Don Cossacks. The *hetman* is seen seated on a rock, gazing into the distance. He seems to be hewn out of stone. Then the camera brings him closer to us and we see him in a simple Cossack tunic. His monumental aspect and significance are not lost in his simplicity, however.

Bogdan Khmelnytsky is shown as the people's leader. The people's suffering is his suffering. A prosperous Cossack, he rises above class barriers and strives with all his being to realise the people's dream of freedom and happiness. He refuses to perform obeisance to the Poles when their emissaries promise total 'forgiveness' to the rebel and the Ukrainian people in exchange for submission. Khmelnytsky boils over with rage: he rises in fury and walks across the food-laden table, the shortest possible path, to express his anger to the emissaries. 'Today I am going to move against your king. I'll chase all the princes and dukes out of our land,' the *hetman* says threateningly, his eyes blazing. It is the people, inflexible in their hatred for their enemy, who speak through his lips.

The figures of Khmelnytsky's closest aides and the ordinary soldiers among his troops are depicted colourfully.

Khmelnytsky's fellow fighters, Ivan Bogun (in whose memory Shchors' legendary regiment was named during the Civil

War) and Maxim Krivonos, like Aleksandr Nevsky's warriors, Vassily Buslai and Gavril Oleksich, embody two elements in the people's patriotic war. This is not simply a convenient schematic arrangement, but a reflection of the complex soul of the popular movement.

Bogun is very similar to Vassily Buslai—he is a brave, high-spirited romantic. Krivonos is a peasant—wise, balanced, and cautious in his decisions.

Khmelnitsky's troops are united by their love for the Ukraine and their hatred for their oppressors, a hatred that gives them towering strength, smashes the enemy, and makes them capable of self-sacrificing feats.

There are many deaths in the film. The elderly Cossack, Tur, is slowly and cruelly tortured in the enemy camp. He has given himself up as a prisoner to Pototsky, knowing he faces certain death, in order to mislead his captors with false information about the Cossack forces.

The Cossack Niva and his six sons are tied to the stake and burned alive. But they laugh at the enemy's insignificance right in their faces. This scene could easily have seemed contrived, but the film convinces the audience of its truthfulness—and it was true, for chronicles and folk songs speak of many examples of extraordinary courage born of patriotic fervour.

The people were unconquerable. The episode showing the storming of the Polish castle defended by cannon-fire, a deep fosse, and unscaleable walls is particularly impressive. The castle seems impregnable. But the Cossack attack cannot be beaten off: every man who falls is replaced by ten more warriors. This historic battle was shown as a feat performed by all the people.

The warriors under the Polish *hetman*, Nikolai Pototsky, are entirely different. They are all beautifully and elegantly dressed in gold, silver, velvet, and silk. Their splendour is a means of psychologically impressing the serfs, but also an indication of their own historical weakness, a sense that their days are numbered. It is interesting that in Gogol's *Taras*

*Bulba*, a work very reminiscent of this film stylistically and thematically, the Polish feudal lords are also incredibly beautiful: their splendour has a specific purpose and is emphasised by the writer. The Polish overlords are historically in the wrong. Their efforts do not create a patriotic spirit, and this spells their historical doom.

*Bogdan Khmelnytsky* has very justly become a classic of the Soviet cinema. It convincingly recreated the atmosphere of the mid-seventeenth century and the historical conditions in which the Ukrainian people showed extraordinary heroism and self-sacrifice in fighting for their national freedom.

## 2.

During the Second World War as the Soviet people fought furiously for their freedom and independence, Soviet films were particularly powerful and topical in reminding audiences of their glorious ancestors who had stood firm against foreign invaders.

Ten historical films were made during the war, the majority of which dealt with the people's victories on the field of battle, and with famous commanders and state figures.

The traditions of the historical-biographical film were developed in such films as *Kutuzov* and *Ivan the Terrible*, which were especially powerful in treating the theme of the Russian people's unity in the face of their enemies.

*Kutuzov* was directed by V. Petrov on the basis of a script by V. Solovyov, and it aimed at creating an historically accurate characterisation of Suvorov's favourite pupil, the brilliant commander who crushed Napoleon in 1812. The role of Kutuzov was performed by A. Diky.

Drawing on new facts brought to light by Soviet historians, the film-makers did not adhere to the traditional view of Kutuzov presented by history and literature. Unlike Tolstoy's view of Kutuzov in *War and Peace*, for instance, Kutuzov in this film was an energetic, strong-willed commander without

any trace of fatalism in his character. When the Russia's fate was being decided at Borodino, he quickly gave his troops brief, precise orders, oversaw the battle's progress every minute, and passionately sought and found the path to victory.

He was also a simple, responsive man, loved by his soldiers, a man who knew the Russian people's spiritual strength and capabilities better than anyone else.

This film was made in difficult circumstances. The Mosfilm Studios had just returned to Moscow from its place of evacuation and the battle scenes had to be filmed on studio sets, even the Battle of Borodino and the crossing of the Berezina River. The film is perhaps weak in its characterisation of individual soldiers and they tend to be rather schematic and one-dimensional. Nonetheless, as a whole it was monumental and truthful, and imbued with the loftiest patriotic ideas.

The film-makers succeeded in showing the popular nature of the War of 1812 and the inevitability of defeat for Napoleon's troops, who lacked lofty patriotic ideals and were fighting an unjust war of acquisition.

*Kutuzov* was released in 1944, when the fight against the fascist invaders had not yet ended, and had a very topical ring about it, bringing to mind immediate associations and analogies. The heroic past was closer than ever to the present moment. The theme of love for one's native land rang out proudly in this treatment of Kutuzov's era.

*Ivan the Terrible* was conceived by Eisenstein before the war as a far-ranging film concerned with the activity of Tsar Ivan IV in creating a centralised Russian state. The outbreak of the Second World War and the evacuation of Mosfilm Studio delayed completion of the film. The first part of *Ivan the Terrible* was completed in late 1944.

It is almost impossible to give a simple appraisal of the extremely complex figure of Ivan IV. From the time of Russian historian Karamzin, most pre-revolutionary writers saw Ivan in a decidedly negative light, both as a man and as a state figure, contrasting him to Prince Kurbsky who escaped into

Lithuania from this 'cruel and bloody tyrant'. Soviet writers (especially A. Tolstoy) saw and emphasised the positive aspects of Ivan's activity. Like Tolstoy, Eisenstein was convinced of Ivan IV's progressive character, although he also saw his dark side.

The film provides a clear portrait of this major state figure and patriot who carried out his historical mission without regard for the cost.

Eisenstein's film could not, of course, include all the events in this 'tempestuous era', but it did show all the most important milestones. Under the leadership of Ivan the Terrible, the Grand Duchy of Moscow was transformed into a strong, centralised power with a powerful, regular army. Ivan IV's reforms tore away the bastions of the feudal boyars who, although they fought back desperately, were defeated, as ordained by history. Russia overcame its feudal divisions and national isolation, and emerged into the international arena. The external policies of 'the Tsar of all Russia' were directed at liberating lands still held by the Tatars (the Kazan, Astrakhan, and Siberian Khanates), and the historically justified struggle for an outlet to the Baltic Sea.

Eisenstein intended to depict the Livonian War in the third part of this film, and to dedicate the second, intermediate, part to a detailed examination of the Tsar's struggle against the boyars. The purposeful Ivan IV of the first part is much closer to us than the state figure of the second part, exhausted by his struggle for power and having exchanged his warrior's garb for monastic robes.

The theme of the consolidation of Russia, and of Ivan's struggle and sufferings 'for the sake of the Russian state' is particularly pronounced in the film's first part. The hero holds the commander's sword firmly in his hands. One of the Russian people's greatest feats—the defeat of the Khanate of Kazan—is strongly depicted on the screen. The wind tears at the religious banners outside the walls of Kazan; the field of battle can barely be made out for the clouds of smoke from

cannon-fire that overhang it. The Russian troops courageously attempt to scale walls that look impregnable. Their stubbornness and valour are without bounds. Heading the troops is Ivan the Terrible, who is shown less as a military commander than as the realisor of the Russian people's historic strivings.

'His was energetic, deep, gigantic spirit', Belinsky wrote of Ivan the Terrible. And that is the way he is imprinted in our memories thanks to Eisenstein and N. Cherkasov, an outstanding actor who forcefully showed the process of the transformation of an inexperienced youth into a ruler who was terrifying to the internal and external enemies of the Russian land.

The film's patriotic ideas, embodied in the perfect artistic form characteristic of Eisenstein's work, was an important contribution to the struggle against fascism.

During this same period the various Soviet republics also made successful efforts to create epic historical films. Mikhail Chiaureli made *Georgy Saakadze* at the Tbilisi Studios, and A. Bek-Nazarov directed *David bek* at the Yerevan Studios.

A. Antonovskaya and B. Cherny wrote the script for *Georgy Saakadze* before the war, based on an historical novel by Antonovskaya. Filming of this two-part epic took place in war-time in extremely difficult conditions, but the Tbilisi Studios spared no effort to recreate the life and activity of this famous Georgian military commander and state figure on the screen.

In the early seventeenth century, Georgia was divided into many individual kingdoms and principalities. The freedom-loving Georgian people, weakened by the blows of neighbouring rulers and the oppression of feudal lords, dreamed of unifying their country and creating a mighty state. Georgy Saakadze succeeded in uniting the popular masses inspired by patriotic ideas under his leadership and went on to a series of brilliant victories on the battlefield.

'Happy is the man whose heart beats for his homeland' is engraved on the sword that Saakadze carries into battle.

The film's basic plot line derives from the opposition of two figures. On one side stands Georgy Saakadze, a member of the minor local gentry and the people's friend, a man, whose talent, valour, and strength leads him to become a 'great ruler'. On the other side is Prince Shadiman Baratashvili, the leader of the feudal lords, an experienced ruler and warrior who hates the common people fighting for their class interests. The struggle waged by Saakadze and his supporters against the predatory feudal lords stands at the very centre of the film. The film's marked heroic line and romantic colouring splendidly contrasts with the realistic depiction of Saakadze's era.

*David bek* directed by the highly talented Amo Bek-Nazarov, was also filmed during the war.

Popular legends about historical figures, no matter however fictitious details of the story may be, always contain some historical truth. The legends about David bek and Bek-Nazarov's film about him present an integrated picture of this hero who gave all his strength to the struggle for his country's freedom and happiness.

This film tells how a general uprising took shape under the leadership of the talented military leader, David bek, against the local viceroy of the Iranian Shah and how, with the help of Peter the Great's troops, who assisted in the liberation struggle, the Armenian people triumphed over their enemy.

Films of this type, made by the Soviet republics, were highly important. We should keep in mind that fascism tried to bring out national enmities between the Soviet peoples in the hope that the Soviet republics would secede. *David bek* was a convincing answer by film-makers to nazi theoreticians on the national question. The friendship of the fraternal Soviet peoples with the Russian people, which became even stronger in their mutual struggle against nazi Germany, had deep roots. A. Bek-Nazarov's film organically interwove this theme with the theme of the Armenian people's national liberation struggle against foreign oppressors.

In making this film about his people's distant past, A. Bek-

Nazarov faithfully adhered to historical truth. Certain episodes were not only historically accurate, however, but also bore references to contemporary events, to heroism in the current war. In his book, the director recalls meetings and conversations with the famous pilot, N. Stepanyan (twice-decorated Hero of the Soviet Union), and other courageous military heroes. Bek-Nazarov stresses that their stories helped him to create one of the film's best scenes, in which David bek remained in an empty church all night long, thinking of the impending major battle.

Actor Grachia Nersesyan created a magnificent, noble David bek — wise, talented, and courageous. His outwardly restrained acting was filled with great inner power and inspiration. The film contains outstanding battle scenes which expressed the film's main patriotic idea — appealing to men to perform feats for the sake of the most precious thing a man has — his freedom and homeland.

### 3.

The principles underlying historical-biographical films that took shape in the thirties and were developed further during the war continued to be valid for post-war film-making.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s films treating great historical figures occupied a leading place in Soviet cinema. Biographical films became the only genre in which historical questions were explored. Russian surgeon Pirogov, the father of modern anthropology Miklukho-Maklai, great physiologist Pavlov, inventor of the radio Popov, the famous poet Shevchenko, and a whole series of composers (Mussorgsky, Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov), the traveller Przhevalsky, scholar and innovator Zhukovsky, and many other figures were the subjects of films. The Soviet people sought examples to be imitated in the biographies of historical figures and found rich source for the education of patriotic feelings.



Among the historical-biographical films from this period two films were particularly outstanding. They dealt with two Russian Admirals of the Fleet—Nakhimov and Ushakov.

*Admiral Nakhimov* was conceived at the end of the war. The script was written by I. Lukovsky and it was directed by V. Pudovkin, who had made many historical films.

Nakhimov's biography contains a wealth of material for a film about the glory of the Russian navy. The plot dealt with the Crimean War of 1853-1856, in which Nakhimov's military feats were performed.

The very first scene of the film sketches in the main outlines of the character. After the bold attack on Anakria, which forces Turkey to recognise Russian claims to the shores of the Black Sea, the Russian squadron is returning to Sebastopol when it encounters a fierce storm at sea. The sailors fight the elements while Nakhimov encourages them from the captain's bridge. He is calm and confident of his sailors' ability to holdfast in the face of the storm. He speaks quietly, but his brief, dry commands and words of encouragement carry through the thundering hurricane. Nakhimov remains the same throughout the film—unpretentious, severe, and magnificent.

The scene of the Battle of Sinope, in which the Russians emerge victorious thanks to the Admiral's boldly-conceived plan and its faultless realisation by the Russian squadron, is a memorable one. We see Nakhimov coolly directing the movements of each ship under enemy fire. We see how the sailor Koshka, Lieutenant Burunov, and other characters fight. It becomes clear that the Russians' strength lies in their patriotism, in their conscious carrying out of their duty and understanding of their place in battle.

There is one scene in the film in which Nakhimov cries as ships are being sunk. A. Diky's talent shows its high dramatic capabilities at this point—tears of grief and anger flow down the admiral's cheeks, but his eyes show his will-power, his unconquerable spirit, his faith in victory.

The episodes dedicated to the heroic defence of Sebastopol during the Crimean War brought up memories of the recent past—the defence of the embattled city during the Second World War. Audiences applauded when the sailors attacked their numerically superiour enemy in a great push forward. They attacked and they emerged victorious. And the legendary Admiral Nakhimov was always at their head at the most difficult moments.

This was perhaps the first Soviet historical film to show the death of the main character and Admiral Nakhimov died a true hero's death. The oath of allegiance to their native country that the defenders of Sebastopol swear over Nakhimov's body will live through the centuries.

In the early 1950s, Mikhail Romm made a two-part epic about Nakhimov's predecessor—Admiral Ushakov. His films, *Admiral Ushakov* (1953) and *The Ships Storm the Bastions* (1953), are not really biographies of Ushakov, but broad historical treatments of Russia's struggle to create a powerful navy and to acquire access to the Black Sea.

This script by A. Shtein was based on historical events that occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and attempted to outline the international atmosphere of the era. On the screen audiences saw Catherine II, Paul I, Alexander I, and the numerous luminaries surrounding them, especially Prince Potemkin. Suvorov, William Pitt, the Turkish Sultan, Admiral Nelson, Napoleon, and many other historical figures also appeared in these two films.

Ushakov (acted by I. Pereverzev) feels uncomfortable at court, but confident at the ship's helm. Like his contemporary Suvorov, he was much closer to the working people than to the tsarist dukes and princes. Like Suvorov, he also hated the court's ceremonial ways, and was not guided either by ambition or pride, or the desire to make a career for himself, but only by his concern for the affair at hand.

These films disclose the most outstanding features of Ushakov's talent. Each of his victories is due to his unexpectedly

bold tactics, which the famous foreign admirals do not even think of.

In the battle scenes (the storming of Corfu and others), the director succeeds in focusing attention on individual heroes in the battle. The mass of men takes on more individual features, and we see how Ushakov's strategic ideas are carried out. The feats performed by Senyavin and Tikhon Prokofiev, who raises the flag on the fortress and falls down dead, the heroism of the sailors, Khovrin and Pirozhkov, make the course of the battle more concrete.

In the film Ushakov is not only a talented admiral who took the fortress of Corfu, regarded as inaccessible, by a brilliant naval attack, but also an organiser. It was during this era that the Black Sea Fleet was established, and Sebastopol became a symbol of Russian glory.

Kherson in flames is depicted on the screen. The interventionists brought the plague to the city in order to disturb construction of the fleet and fortifications along the Black Sea shore. The last shipbuilders leave Kherson, vanquished by disease. Suddenly they see an orderly column of soldiers and sailors from Petersburg approaching them. Ushakov is at their head. With no regard for death, the Russian soldiers enter the burning city to consolidate the Russian Black Sea positions. Ushakov triumphs over the plague and prevents it from spreading into the country's heartland, thus saving the lives of thousands of people.

Ushakov establishes friendly relations with the common people engaged in shipbuilding, as well as with the serfs sent to build the Black Sea Fleet.

#### 4.

The Soviet cinema has furnished numerous vivid examples of historical films. Sergei Bondarchuk's epic production of Lev Tolstoy's *War and Peace* is the high-point to date of Soviet film-makers' efforts in this demanding genre.

A viewing of *War and Peace* inevitably brings to mind

V. Petrov's production of *Kutuzov*. Both films dealt with the War of 1812. We have already mentioned the historically accurate presentation of Kutuzov in Petrov's film. Yet the war's main heroes—the Russian people—are only fleetingly presented in this latter film, without sufficient depth. Although the popular character of the patriotic War of 1812 is pointed out, it is not developed and is lost somewhere in the smoke of its battle scenes. The figure of Kutuzov obscures the activity of the people to a certain extent.

Bondarchuk's film, like Tolstoy's novel, has another focus altogether—the consolidation of the entire people, of all the nation's healthy forces in the name of a lofty patriotic goal. Script-writer V. Solovyov and director Bondarchuk showed clearly by cinematic means the great writer's conviction that the war against Napoleon was won by the people, who in both the novel and the film are represented by Captain Tushin and Nikolai Rostov, Field-Marshal Kutuzov and the bombardiers of the Shevardin redoubt, by Prince Andrei Bolkonsky and the soldiers of his regiment. The film emerges as a hymn to Russia's feat in raising 'the club of a people's war' against a foreign conqueror. The blows struck against the enemy in this just, sacred war totally vanquished Napoleon's seemingly unconquerable army.

This moral basis underlying the Russian national epic was all but totally neglected in the American movie version of *War and Peace*, in which the historical aspect was overshadowed by the personal aspect. Tolstoy's heroes were characterised as 'private' individuals, with very little attention given to them as participants in this popular war.

Sergei Bondarchuk's film, like its literary source, is made up of many layers, including 'war' and 'peace', an epic sweep, lyricism, history, and romance. Tolstoy's philosophical reflections were not left out of the film, either—his wise reflections, the result of much suffering, on life and human happiness.

To bring Tolstoy to the screen is very difficult for many

reasons, including from the historical point of view. For alongside real historical figures (Aleksandr I, Kutuzov, Napoleon, etc.) we find Tolstoy's beloved heroes, imaginary characters (Andrei, Pierre, Natasha). The writer dealt so brilliantly with this difficult task that for Russian readers the whole novel and all of its characters have become an accepted part of their ideas about Russian history and the character of the Russian people. The film *War and Peace* left this sense intact, giving it a vivid visual expression.

Tolstoy's characters — Andrei Bolkonsky, Natasha Rostova, and Pierre Bezukhov — have a rich inner life which incorporates all of life's phenomena, moral values, human accomplishments over the centuries, beauty of the mind, and the charm of Russian nature.

Natasha, for instance, says as she admires the moonlit night through her open window: 'It's so lovely. If only I could just kneel down, put my arms around my knees ... and fly away...'

How can the screen convey the way Natasha feels at that moment, the sense of flying, the sense of the infinite, endless world? The modern cinema is able to handle this. A. Petritsky's camera suddenly begins to sweep upward, higher and higher, drawing the viewer along with it, until it seems we are flying over the tree-tops, almost touching them with our feet, then we fly even higher and see the earth through clumps of white clouds. The fresh greenery is an earthly, green sea. A distant view spreads out in every direction, we see how broad and boundless the world is, how beautiful it is in its diversity, and we feel our unity with it.

Scenes like this open *War and Peace*. They are preceded by Tolstoy's words on the screen: 'I only wish to say that all the ideas that have momentous consequences are always simple ideas. My central idea is that if evil men stand together and constitute a force, then honest men should do the same. This is indeed simple.'

This epigraph underscores the main idea behind Bon-

darchuk's entire four-part film about large people with large feelings and thoughts, with a broad view of the world and life. 'Together with Tolstoy, we tried — by cinematic means — to convey to the viewer the sense of human unity, love for life in all of its forms', stated Bondarchuk.

Many episodes, particularly in the first part, are externally static, they contain very little of what we usually call dramatic action. We should mention, however, that Tolstoy's novel is not a traditional novel with a captivating plot. It is more like a chronicle. Various pictures of life follow one another with very little to actually link them together, and in the same way scenes and episodes flow together in an unhurried manner on the screen. It is not the way the characters are caught up in the plot that gives movement to the whole, but the flow of time itself, major historical events that intrude into peoples' lives and catch people up in their irresistible surge.

*War and Peace* very precisely depicts the experiences of its heroes, people of very different ages, characters, and beliefs. Above all, it memorably conveys the feelings of men at war, during severely trying moments that fell to the lot of the soldiers and all the people. In this respect there is no other book in world literature that delves into the soldier's psychology with such philosophical depth and sweep.

Tolstoy hates both war and Napoleon, who caused hundreds of thousands of people to fight a bloody, pointless battle. But if war begins, if it is inevitable, then the defence of Russia and the enemy's defeat becomes a sacred duty: the sacred duty of every Russian. That is why *War and Peace* is filled with Tolstoy's reflections on heroism in battle and the loftiest moral principles, which in the final analysis are the decisive factor.

Tolstoy's thoughts are all the more valuable in that he saw war with his own eyes, for he participated in the famous defence of Sebastopol during the Crimean War of 1854-1856.

The film-makers had a difficult job to perform in choosing what to include. The one-and-a-half thousand page novel was

whittled down to three-hundred typed pages containing what was most important in the novel.

Pierre Bezukhov (acted by Bondarchuk) and Andrei Bolkonsky (acted by V. Tikhonov), old friends, meet and are contrasted on the battlefield at Borodino. Bezukhov, a totally non-military man, awkward, clumsy, without any physical skills, and near-sighted into the bargain, wanders at the height of the battle among the units, wanting to be of use somewhere. Pierre's unflappability in the midst of exploding shells calls forth the admiration of experienced soldiers. They stare at him in amazement, and with good reason: for they see, with the sort of acute intuition that occurs at such moments, a particular fullness of life in him. The sort of fullness that seems to protect a man from bullets, that protects him from everything, no matter where he may be.

Long before the Battle of Borodino, Andrei Bolkonsky has felt his life forces waning, his faith in life and himself ebbing away, as if he has lost some very important, vital factor in life.

A shell falls near him, spins, gives off sparks and flames. Prince Andrei only sees it for a split second, but a great deal takes place in his mind during this second. Psychological time does not coincide with real time. This is not difficult to show on the screen. Pudovkin termed this 'the time warp'. It is as if a tiny moment in time is examined through a magnifying glass, which extends it; as long as it lasts a great deal can happen and be examined.

Prince Andrei sees a handful of flowers in the high grass of a ravine, then a copse, familiar and typically Russian. For some reason, by some strange association of ideas, he sees soldiers bathing during a halt; the river, filled with strong, healthy bodies, seems about to overflow its banks. The next instant Andrei's thoughts switch to home, the Otradnoe estate, and to his son, Nikolai, who is five years old. Then the high grass again and the grenade still spinning in it, giving off sparks and flames. One instant more, and it explodes.

The injury he receives at Borodino is severe, but Bolkonsky dies from it only because he accepts death, because he lacks the will to live.

Battle scenes occupy an important place in this film. However, in line with Tolstoy's conceptions, they are not simply outwardly effective 'compositions', but moments at which the people's patriotic feelings manifest themselves most clearly.

It is the eve of the Battle of Borodino. The French units are on the move with their tri-colour flags. They are out-of-place and immediately noticeable in this typically Russian landscape, filmed with such loving attention. The Russian soldiers also file past the camera with their regimental flags. The columns follow each other in even files; from far away the soldiers seem miniature figures, all of them the same. But then the camera shows their faces in close-up—each face has its own memorable features, its own intelligence and wisdom. In wartime, soldiers become philosophers, they come to know life closely, feel life, and speak about it with gusto. Tolstoy liked to listen to soldiers' jokes, songs, and conversations, and to write them down. They are strong, witty, bold, truthful, and have a special brand of masculine poetry about them.

A whole gallery of Russian soldiers are depicted in *War and Peace* through successful acting and interesting camera-work.

One figure is a small, agile, merry soldier, always joking and making the men laugh, a type to be found in every unit. A shell bursts nearby. By some miracle no one is killed or injured. This is a cause for rejoicing, for joking.

Another figure is a young officer, not much to look at—he's so young that he's only just beginning to grow a moustache. He doesn't joke, he is totally absorbed in the battle, not for his own sake, but for the sake of his duty, which he wants to carry out to the last detail.

Kutuzov, the army's Commander-in-Chief, was acted by Boris Zakhava, an actor of the old 'Vakhtangov school', who



splendidly fused Tolstoy's Kutuzov with the real, historical Kutuzov. His Kutuzov is an integral, organic, and energetic character. Kutuzov's doubts and hesitations, as well as his indecisiveness, which were explained in the novel by his fatalistic view of the historical process, are naturally moved into the background in the film. Zakhava stresses the best traits of the Russian people in Kutuzov's character: their wisdom, sincerity, and kind-heartedness, yet combined with steadfastness, courage, and inflexibility in the face of an enemy. Kutuzov is a true commander 'of the people'. All the soldiers know and love him. In his turn, the Field-Marshal knows and loves his soldiers. He will remember a man to the end of his life if he has seen something important in him, even if only for a moment.

He is experienced not only in directing troop movements. He has attained something more important — the philosophy of struggle. He knows that success depends in the final analysis not on whether the right or left flank is properly fortified, although this, too, is very important, but on the feeling that each soldier holds in his heart.

At the end of the day of the battle, when one of the generals, a German 'specialist' serving in the Russian army, reports defeat, Kutuzov cannot disguise his displeasure. The general only sees external facts: abandoned fortifications, equipment lost. He does not see the most important thing — the turning point that the Russian soldiers have experienced during the battle, he does not see the enormous victory they have won — a victory of the spirit. Kutuzov feels this very acutely and is therefore confident that Napoleon will be defeated.

Kutuzov is a great, highly experienced commander; over many long years he has not only acquired vast knowledge in his own and related fields, but he has also developed a refined sense of intuition that he trusts. And this intuition does not let him down. It urges him towards the right decision: to retreat at first, even sacrificing Moscow, if necessary.

Napoleon is the antithesis of Kutuzov. Tolstoy portrayed

him an anti-Christ. Bondarchuk and actor V. Strzhelchik followed this interpretation very faithfully. Napoleon is shown as responsible for tearing hundreds of thousands of men from their families, from their needed labour and forcing them into pointless battles in which they kill other peasants like themselves.

Much blood was shed during the Battle of Borodino. Tens of thousands of men fight amidst clouds of smoke on the wide screen. Russian grenadiers, French dragoons, Tzar's hussars, and Napoleonic uhlans make countless attacks and counter-attacks across mountains of bodies. Seven hundred cannon thunder, spewing out flames and death.

The Soviet Ministry of Defence had offered special units (12,000 infantrymen, cavalrymen, and artillerymen), which were trained under the guidance of experts according to regulations of the Russian and French armies from the Napoleonic era for the battle scenes in the film. The descendants of Platov's legendary Cossacks, of whom the French were especially frightened, took part in the act.

Everything was just as it was over a century and a half ago. The reconstruction of the battle scene was as accurate as possible. And not just for the sake of colourful effects, but for the sake of historical truth.

The battle was uncompromising and deadly. Tens of thousands of men were killed. Borodino exhausted the resources of both sides, but was a moral victory for the Russian army. That was how Field-Marshal Kutuzov understood the meaning of the battle, that was the way Tolstoy depicted it, in accordance with historical truth, and that is the way Bondarchuk showed it on the screen. Tolstoy's belief in the moral triumph of the Russian army at Borodino is read on the sound-track at the end of the film's third part, underscoring the portraits of soldiers flashed on the screen, soldiers whom we have seen in the course of the film. These faces alone, blackened with gunpowder and blood-spattered, yet somehow shining and bright from within — from patriotic enthusiasm —

radiate confidence in their superiority to the enemy, in their victory.

The War of 1812 was an immortal page in Russian history. Not only the regular army, but also peasants, adolescents, women, and old men fought against the enemy. It was a truly popularly-based struggle, in which heroism became a massive affair, and self-sacrificing feats became a typical occurrence.

Delivering the Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party to the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the CPSU L. I. Brezhnev said:

‘In recent years much has been done in the way of fostering in Soviet people pride for their country, for their people and their great achievements, and a feeling of respect for the outstanding achievements of the past.’ \*

Soviet artists today are continuing to devote serious attention to working out ‘links across time’, one of the most important problems in modern art. In this respect, the cinema possesses many advantages over the other arts, for there is perhaps no other art-form that can visually recreate a page in our history or the heroic deeds of our ancestors.

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\* *24th Congress of the CPSU*, Moscow, 1971, p. 101.

## THE SECOND WORLD WAR ON THE SCREEN

## 1.

Today, more than thirty years after the defeat of nazi Germany, we view the films made long ago in the pre-war period, based on material furnished by the times, when the impending storm could already be felt approaching, with a sense of disquiet and deep emotion. This sense of an impending storm can already be felt in Aleksandr Dovzhenko's 1935 film, *Aerograd*.

During work on this film, Dovzhenko travelled all over the Soviet Far East. He came to the conclusion that the future of this area of the country demanded new economic centres. 'We should build another major city on the shores of the Pacific—a second Vladivostok,' he said. 'I even found a location for the building of Aerograd and have decided this is the right place. And that is why I say that Aerograd is not just an artist's fantasy, but a reality of today. If this city does not yet exist, that does not prove that it shouldn't exist.'

A great artist sees things ahead of his time. Dovzhenko regarded it as an artist's duty not only to reflect reality, but to strive to see into the future in his work. He should have a deep knowledge of life in all its aspects, should understand the tendencies in its development, and should create works of art that tell us how to live today and what to prepare for in the future.

The film *On the Border* (directed by A. Ivanov) was released shortly afterwards. It dealt with an act of provocation that was typical of incidents occurring systematically along the Far Eastern border at the time, an incident very similar to one that occurred on the Khalkin-Gol River.

Life was proceeding peacefully along the border. The collective farm workers did not suspect what was being prepared for them on the other side. The Japanese military were dressing White Guard emigrés in Soviet military uniforms, and sending

them across to the Soviet side of the border. When the collective farm workers learn about this, they speedily inform the Soviet border guards.

Having tested the border, the alertness of the border guards, and the vigilance of the local population, the enemy retreats. This time, at least, he has been caught out — but this is certainly not the last such attempt.

These films have certain indisputably good qualities that the years have not erased: they reflect very accurately the sense of disquiet in which their chief characters and the film-makers themselves lived.

Viewers and readers in the 1930s were very receptive to stories about pilots. The cinema also took up this theme often. Only a few of these films, however, succeeded in revealing the pilot's fascinating world to any great degree.

The hero of *Fighter Planes* (script written by F. Knorre, directed by E. Pentslin, 1939), Sergei Kozhukharov graduates from pilots' school and begins to fly professionally. All of his actions, his attitude towards each assignment shows a new character, a lofty sense of duty. During a high-speed flight, in which every second counts, he loses time by slowing down to warn of an impending train crash. He returns to the flying field last and modestly does not explain why he was delayed.

Then during an accidental explosion, Kozhukharov goes into the flames to save a small boy, as a result of which he loses his sight. He no longer sees the sun or the blue skies; he only hears the roar of motors, by which he recognises his squadron, and which constantly reminds him of the beloved profession he has lost.

He steadfastly endures all his trials, rejects the love of a girl he has known since school, not wanting to be a burden to her. These episodes are memorable, but they contain more professional skill than truth. The film-script is artificial and full of clichés, and it ends with Sergei regaining his sight after a miraculous operation.

Two films made by director Mikhail Kalatozov, *Courage*

(1939) and *Valery Chkalov* (1941), were more realistic and still attract audiences today.

The first film shows the work of Soviet pilots along the Soviet border. The courageous pilot, Tomilin (acted by the popular Oleg Zhakov), is a compelling figure.

Tomilin receives the assignment of delivering an important, secret package to border guards in the mountains. However, by faking illness, a foreign spy tricks Tomilin into taking him aboard his plane and then tries to force him to fly across the border at gun-point.

An exciting drama in the skies begins as Tomilin decides to wear out his enemy. The plane rises steeply, then plunges downwards, spinning dizzily. All this takes place against a background of mountainous landscapes. The audience is brought up close to the plane, then sees it as a small metal bird flown by its brave pilot far into the distance, where it is nearly lost from view among the mountain ridges, sombre ice-caps, dark ravines, and dazzling, gleaming peaks. Not only mountains, but villages, cultivated farmlands in the valleys, and peacefully grazing herds swim into view. All of this is endangered by the enemy.

The basic ideas and themes in this film were continued in Kalatozov's next film, *Valery Chkalov*. The film's very opening immediately showed its natural, unpretentious plot. Chkalov is sitting in the garrison guard-room—his punishment for a daring flight under a bridge. But then the necessity arises of sending him to carry out a difficult assignment: taking part in naval manoeuvres. Having performed his assignment splendidly, he returns ... and is sent to the guard-room again to complete his punishment.

After this, the story of this powerful character slowly unfolds on the screen.

Chkalov's path in the film does not follow a straight line. Chkalov takes risks often—maybe even too often. Why? So that Soviet pilots would fly—as the saying went at the time—faster, longer, and higher than anyone else in the world.

Chkalov experienced moments of crisis and serious reflection, even doubt. He sometimes wondered if he shouldn't give it all up. But the very sight of a plane erased all his doubts and gave him one wish only—to fly.

Chkalov was a test pilot, which meant that he tested the first models of planes that the army would use later on. He tried to determine 'the character' of each plane, at no matter what the risk to himself, to help the designer build perfected versions. In one scene Chkalov tries to convince a hesitant factory manager to allow him to make a flight: 'You know, I have a wife and children, yet I take these risks. That must mean it has to be done. But what are you risking? Your job?'

The character of Chkalov the pilot merges with Chkalov the man. A living, full-blooded man is shown with all his rough edges.

This biographical film about the pilot who was the first to make a non-stop flight across the North Pole to America, enjoyed great popularity in the enthusiastic atmosphere produced by the achievements of many Soviet pilots. The choice of actor to perform the main role was also a happy one. Moscow Art Theatre actor Vladimir Belokurov resembled Chkalov physically and in other ways. Both were from the Volga area, both had the expansive temperament typical of this region; Belokurov showed Chkalov as generous in his acceptance of life, self-confident, successful in everything he fought for—on the whole, a talented fellow. He was a man of natural gifts like Chapaev and Kotovsky, and like many of the military leaders, pilots, political workers, and military designers who were soon to emerge in the war.

Another film from this period, *A Fellow From Our Town* (1942), also showed new cinematic trends.

Lukonin, a young Russian from a town along the Volga River, was played by Nikolai Kryuchkov, a favorite with audiences, an actor capable of 'fleshing-out' a character that may have only a sketchy existence in the script and making him an unforgettable and vivid person.

Kryuchkov's character was the highlight of *A Fellow From Our Town* which was very contrived and overly sentimental, the same faults to be found in films like *If War Comes Tomorrow* and *Squadron Five*.

This film suffers from an unbelievable plot, and an unreal triumph at the end: Lukonin manages to escape from a fascist prison in Spain, and then later, during the war in Russia, he meets the same former White Guard officer who had questioned him in prison, thereby getting an opportunity to personally revenge himself on his enemy. The ending shows the film-makers' attempts to strike an optimistic note, but unfortunately it falls flat.

Despite the series of fortunate coincidences that befall the hero, *A Fellow From Our Town* was warmly received by the audiences.

## 2.

From the very outbreak of the war, documental cameramen went off to the front — both young graduates of the Moscow Film Institute like Maria Sukhova, who lost her life during the war, and cameramen of the older generation, like Petr Ermolov, who had filmed Lenin and Chapaev in his time, and who accompanied reconnaissance expeditions at the front. Documental cinematographers carried out their important, patriotic mission in tank units, in the infantry, on military planes, and in partisan detachments.

While *The Defeat of the German Army at Moscow* was being filmed, the weather was so cold that the camera mechanisms stopped working; the cameramen had to warm them up with their own body heat. Heavy snowfall made the roads impassable; heavy camera equipment had to be taken to the filming location either on foot or on skis.

On January 12, 1942, *The Defeat of the German Army at Moscow* was shown to the State Defence Committee.



This film was very popular in the Soviet Union and abroad whenever it was shown. More than seven million people saw it in the United States at the time. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences awarded it its highest prize as the best documental film of 1942.

Filming was also carried on daily in Leningrad during the siege of the city.

The film footage shot in Leningrad became part of the precious film chronicle of the Second World War. Some of this footage went into the making of *Nine Hundred Unforgettable Days*.

Nevsky Prospekt under snow. Trams and trolleys are stuck in the snow. Buildings in flames, emaciated and worn-out faces. A tiny portion of bread is the daily ration for each person. Workers sleep beneath their machines in the factories after each day's shift. People's volunteer corps set off for the front.

Nothing could break the steadfastness of the people of Leningrad.

A sports parade takes place in the besieged city. And a football match broadcast throughout the country is picked up by German units, as well.

Dmitry Shostakovich's later-famous Seventh Symphony is performed in the besieged city under artillery fire.

Leningrad was cut off from the rest of the country by an enemy encirclement. Military provisions and supplies had long been in short supply. Only one route existed—the Road of Life—across Lake Ladoga, and supplies and armaments were brought across it. Leningraders also sent their sick and starving children away from the front along this road. We see them delivered into sailors' rough, yet solicitous hands.

Two outstanding documental films by Aleksandr Dovzhenko were also made during the war: *The Battle For Our Soviet Ukraine* and *Victory on the Right-Bank Ukraine*.

Returning to his native Ukraine immediately after the Soviet Army had re-won it from the nazi invaders, Dovzhenko

saw with his own eyes the misery that the people had endured. 'You see my native Kharkov in flames,' says Communist Youth League member Maria Pidtychenko in *The Battle For Our Soviet Ukraine*. 'I was held in Gestapo headquarters here. They beat me up badly, knocked out my teeth, tore out my hair, and knocked my head against the wall.'

Suddenly two scenes from a pre-war newsreel interrupt this pitiful narrative of the horrors of war and the atrocities committed by the nazis: a holiday demonstration in Kiev. These scenes of merry celebration and folk dances contrast sharply with the narrator's accompanying words on the sound track: 'Where are they now? How many of them are shedding tears over their fate in German bondage? How many of you have died? In fifteen years' time we would have transformed our land beyond recognition, we would have planted a hundred million fruit trees, transformed the landscape and climate, and would have lived in a garden, glorified by our artists and poets.'

Dovzhenko's documental films can be compared to speeches made by a people's orator before an audience consisting of millions of people. When he gave orders to his cameramen, Dovzhenko used to say: 'You should always ask yourselves: who am I filming for? Who is going to see this? The whole world should see it. You are filming for all of mankind. Show the whole country to all mankind. The country is the central figure, the positive hero in the great tragedy now being acted out.'

A cinema cameraman, Dovzhenko always said, should feel himself to be a chronicler of history. A short film entitled *Cameraman at the Front* told of one such chronicler whose weapon in the war was his cinema camera. Vladimir Sushchinsky was filming the forcing of the Sivash (or Putrid Sea), the fighting on the Dnieper River and near Leningrad. He sent a note accompanying his footage on the fighting in the Crimea: 'This filmage is incomplete due to the fact that I was shell-shocked by an exploding shell at the very beginning of the

battle on April 8, 1944.' Still shell-shocked, Sushchinsky could not walk, but continued filming from a tank. Moving southwards with the army, he filmed the liberation of Sebastopol. Then on to the Carpathians and Poland. Victory was already at hand when he was killed by a splinter from an enemy shell; the footage he shot during his last few moments alive has been preserved.

This film told of only one cinema cameraman, but nearly two hundred cameramen died courageous deaths at the front. They lie in fraternal graves from the Black Sea to the Pacific.

The documental film *Berlin* is not quickly forgotten. The end of the war was approaching, and director Yuly Raizman was assigned to make a documental film about the battle for Berlin. Raizman left for the front, where he was acquainted with the plan for the impending military operation. Not only new cinema footage was included in the film, but also earlier footage from Soviet and foreign newsreels.

This film reminds viewers of what preceded the storming of Berlin. Hitler and his gang are shown seizing power in Germany; the fascists enslave Europe; nazi hordes invade the Soviet Union. The major stages in the war flash before the viewer's eyes on the screen. All this alternates with scenes of the Soviet Army massing along the Oder.

A shell shown on the screen bears the inscription: 'For Berlin'. Then the shell is loaded into a gun. A series of volleys follows. The attack is shown in its true scope. The artillery preparations are followed by an onslaught by a fleet of tanks, then the airborne divisions join the fighting, and the infantry moves into action.

A cartoon-like map quickly explains the strategy and tactics behind the Soviet invasion. The main directions of the blows struck by the Soviet army are pointed out. A ring is gradually tightened around Berlin. There is fighting in the streets. Another inscription on a shell is shown: 'For the Reichstag!', and this shell, too, is loaded into the barrel of a gun.

These two inscriptions mark the stages of the assault. They also mark the 'stages' in the film's dramatic tension.

Another detail is interesting: as the storming of Berlin begins in the pre-dawn darkness, the soldiers' faces are shown in close-up, illuminated by flashes of gunfire. Soviet cameramen made use of volleys instead of photographic lighting equipment, a detail that lent the filming an amazingly realistic quality.

As the decisive moments in the fighting approach, the narrator falls silent. The pictures speak for themselves. Wobbly, filmed 'on the move', uneven in composition, they have the feel of life itself.

Finally the Soviet flag is raised over the Reichstag. The viewers' hearts leap to their throats. The emotional power in this documental footage is overwhelming.

The Soviet army captured Berlin, and Soviet soldiers signed their names on the Reichstag walls. Today these signatures have been scraped off by the West Berlin authorities, but it is more difficult to erase in the peoples' memories their eternal gratitude to the victorious Soviet Army.

The film *Berlin* received first prize at the Cannes Film Festival in 1946.

More than three-and-a-half-million metres of film footage were used up by newsreel cameramen during the war; dozens of documental films have been made from this material: *The Great Battle on the Volga*, *June 22 on the Border*, *The Twentieth Anniversary of the Great Feat*, *Road Without a Halt*, *To the Living on Behalf of the Dead*, *Their Names Are Immortal*, *Muscovites in 1941*, *We Defended the Caucasus*, *The Battle of Kursk*, *To the Unknown Soldier*, *Leningrad's Feat*, and many others.

A major documental film entitled *The Great Patriotic War* was released for the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution. Its narrative moves simultaneously on two levels — far-ranging, grandiose pictures of hard-won victories, and details, incidents in life at the front: soldiers in the trenches, one plays a harmonica, others warm their hands around a

camp-fire; others take refuge from the rain under a tank; mail is handed out, one soldier reads a letter, a photograph of a little girl with a doll, someone's wife...

A song is sung on the sound-track:

*Restless flames twist and toss in the stove,  
Resin shines on the wood like a tear,  
An accordeon sings about love  
And your eyes and your smile reappear.*

*You are far, far away at this hour —  
Snows between us and winter's hard breath,  
So rejoin you is not in my power,  
Though just four steps divide me from death...*

Songs were more popular during those years than ever before. Perhaps this was because songs succeeded in capturing people's unique feelings more deeply and sincerely than could anything else.

All the major stages in the war pass before the viewer in the space of an hour and a half; he sees hundreds, thousands of faces. Could any heart remain unmoved when these words were spoken on the sound-track: 'You have seen our fighting comrades and fellow soldiers, both living and dead, in this film. Mothers may have seen their sons, whom they mourned long ago, and widows may have seen their husbands, who were cut down in battle...'

### 3.

At the beginning of the war fictional films were left behind the developing events. Naturally, not all the films made at the time were on a high artistic level. Nonetheless they have one indisputable virtue that the years have not diminished: they were all deeply sincere.

These films also fought in their own way. They were seen by men who fought in the war and are still alive today, and by those who fell in the numerous battles along the road to victory.

*Regional Party Committee Secretary* (Ivan Pyriev, 1942) was the first war-time fictional film. The script was written in the first months of the war, hot on the heels of events.

When the nazis come, Stepan Kochet, secretary of the regional Party committee, takes up leadership of a partisan detachment. It was a testing time for people who were not evacuated.

German soldiers line up in the village square. The nazi colonel speaks pompously about the victory of German arms and the defeat of the Russians. One of the nazis wants to affix the German flag bearing the swastika to the regional committee headquarters. Suddenly a shot rings out—a marksman's bullet strikes down the fascist, and the occupiers' flag falls alongside him on the rooftop.

That is the opening to this film about the struggle carried on by Kochet's detachment. The former secretary looks on in painful indignation as the enemy appropriates collective farm property, stuffs sacks to bursting with stolen grain, and cruelly avenges themselves on the peaceful population. But Kochet's partisan detachment continues to grow.

The scene showing the partisans' oath is very powerful, as they swear to mercilessly avenge the Soviet people's blood and the enemy's destruction of Soviet villages and towns. Against a background of fires and hangings their fearful oath rings out: 'Blood for blood, and death for death.'

Confidence in the justness of his cause, courage, and self-sacrifice are the only traits in Kochet's characterisation; there is nothing startlingly new about this character, but V. Vanin, who plays the role, is able to give this middle-aged hero emotional sincerity and capture the viewers' hearts.

Press reviews in the Soviet Union and wherever the film

was shown noted its positive qualities, the most important of which was its passionate patriotism.

The film *Invasion*, taken from a play of the same name by Leonid Leonov and directed by Abram Rohom, was an outstanding event in the war years.

In the autumn of 1941, Fyodor Talanov returns from prison to one of the towns in central Russia which was then at the very front-line.

Talanov is a difficult, complex man. The script-writer, director, and main actor set themselves a hard task and successfully carried it out, thereby winning the film long-standing popularity. Oleg Zhakov, who played the main role, to this day regards it as his best role in over forty years in cinema.

Talanov, the son of a doctor, was always proud and arrogant, but after three years in prison, his sense of offense and anger — against his family and against circumstances — has become even more marked. It is difficult for a man like him to change and start anew with people. Although he wants to do this, each time something happens, he explodes, and breaks off the tentative communication he has established.

Then, too, he has not been welcomed back with open arms. After all, how can he be trusted? No one knows what goes on in his mind. The town is occupied by the Germans. Secretary of the regional Party committee, Kolesnikov, commander of the partisan detachment, makes no secret of the fact that he distrusts Talanov, and has no time to figure him out.

The circumstances demand a lot from Fyodor Talanov. He has many obstacles to overcome before he can be considered an honest man by his fellow men, by his country, and himself.

This film's strength lies in its disclosure of the feat performed by this complicated man. Fyodor Talanov finds the only path possible for himself.

When Kolesnikov, leader of the partisans, must be saved, Talanov sacrifices himself and is tortured by the Nazis.

'I am a Russian. I am defending my country,' he says proudly to his enemies and dies a hero's death.

There are two characters whose portrayal clearly conveys the film-makers' sense of anger and indignation. The arrival of the Germans brings all sorts of human scum to the surface. One of these is Kokoryshkin (acted by G. Spigel), a toady and traitor. Although young, he is already totally lacking in moral principles and cut off from his people. People like him are capable of betraying their own mothers.

Another fellow of the same sort is Fayunin. Before the Revolution he belonged to the ruling, exploiting classes. He owned land and was the town mayor. Now he is the burgomaster, trusted by the occupying forces. The actor who played this part, V. Vanin, had only recently acted the part of a noble Soviet patriot, commander of a partisan detachment. But now this talented actor mobilised all his resources to show us the true face of this human outcast.

The film *Two Soldiers* was made in Central Asia, where a large group of film-makers had been evacuated from Odessa, Kiev, Minsk, Moscow, and Leningrad. It was directed by L. Lukov from the Kiev Studios. Audiences before the war knew him from his realistic films about workers, *A Great Life* and *Miners*.

*Two Soldiers* contained little of the war events themselves, for it dealt with soldiers' life in a short break in the fighting. It concentrates on two front-line soldiers whose lives are shown in detail, with great psychological truthfulness. This was the first such attempt in war-time films. *Two Soldiers* was enormously popular, and this was largely due to the main actors—Boris Andreev and Mark Bernes. Andreev played machine-gunner Sasha Svintsov, a former blacksmith from the Urals. Andreev was already well known to millions of movie-goers from his performances in *A Rich Bride*, *The Tractor-Drivers*, and *A Great Life*. The characters he played, although all very different, merged through his own personality into one on-going role and all his films were received as if



they continued a story about one man. Now viewers saw their old acquaintance at the front. Andreev managed to retain a great deal from his previous roles in this performance, too; both inner characteristics—honesty, frankness, truthfulness, intolerance and brusqueness when he encounters injustice; and outer characteristics—his slow, calm, kind-hearted manner, so typical of physically strong men.

Mark Bernes played Sasha Svintsov's mate in the artillery detachment, a former docker from Odessa, Arkady Dzyubin. His role was also a recognizable, accurate portrait. This high-spirited Odessa joker was—at least outwardly—the exact opposite of Sasha Svintsov. But that did not prevent them from being friends. Sometimes their friendship seems contrived, and only necessary in terms of plot, while the contrast between them makes Arkady seem flighty and superficial, and Sasha slow and ponderous. Critics also pointed out that the war itself is scarcely depicted at all: although the action takes place at the front near Leningrad and in the besieged city, the blockade's atmosphere is scarcely felt in the film.

Director Lukov always recalled his *Two Soldiers* with particular fondness. He also frequently mentioned composer Nikita Bogoslovsky as a major factor in the film's success. The song *In the Dark Night* (words by V. Agatov) sung by Bernes in the film still affects listeners to this day. It was very popular during the war.

In the quiet dug-out Arkady sings late at night: 'In the dark night, I know you—my beloved—are not sleeping, but are shedding tears silently at our child's bedside.' The soldiers stop what they are doing and lift their heads to listen.

Another film from this same period that comes to mind is *Ivan Nikulin, A Russian Sailor*, which tells of the men in the Soviet Navy.

The initial idea came from a short newspaper article. Its author, Ivan Miroshnichenko, related briefly the heroic deeds of Ivan Nikulin, a Black Sea torpedo-man, and his comrades. When they were discharged from a military hospital, they set

off for the front, but found that positions had changed, and so the sailors knock together a partisan detachment. L. Solovyov wrote a story about this, which talented Ukrainian director Igor Savchenko then turned into a film. It was difficult to create the atmosphere of battle and life at the front in the Tashkent Studios in 1942. All manner of devious ways had to be found to build the scenery required and obtain what was needed for the movie.

The film was shot in colour, but colour-film was still in the experimental stage, and the final product left a great deal to be desired visually. Nevertheless, the movie had many good qualities.

Actor Ivan Pereverzev stressed Ivan Nikulin's strength of will and larger-than-life nature.

Sailor Zakhar Fomichev, played by Boris Chirkov, was also a memorable figure.

Then there is 'Pop' (played by Stepan Kayukov), the old 'sea dog' who invests the film with the seaman's irrepressible spirit by his jokes and high-spirits. The distant, heroic past is also introduced through 'Pop'. After the defence of Sebastopol in 1855, a legend of sorts grew up in the sailors' milieu about a sailor named 'Pop'. This legendary 'Pop' was a brave sailor, too, for he managed to fool a fat French admiral and escape from captivity. And so Savchenko and Kayukov linked the present with the distant past on the screen, bringing together a documental story about today's military feats and seamen's folklore dating from the middle of the last century.

The episodes showing how a handful of Black Sea sailors beat off an attack by a much larger nazi force are very powerful. The camera brings us close up to the smoke-blackened faces of the sailors, their sunken eyes, their torn striped sailors' shirts, and their worn, grimy pea-jackets. Then back to their eyes again—eyes that show, not suffering or pain, but an unconquerable will to win.

These sailors in their tiny partisan detachment became immortal; the film's closing shots show torpedo boats named

after them: *Ivan Nikulin, Vassily Klevtsov, Pop, and Zakhar Fomichev.*

During the dark days of the war a film by Friedrich Ermler was released: *She Defends Her Homeland* (1943). First we see how Pasha Lukyanova lived before the war — a young, happy tractor-driver with a loving family and work that she enjoyed. But then the war came, her husband was killed, and her son was crushed by a nazi tank before her very eyes.

Noted Soviet actress Vera Maretskaya, who played the main role in this film, showed the transformation in Pasha's character with great psychological accuracy and artistic skill.

Pasha Lukyanova walks through a forest, overcome by her grief; she looks as though she is on the brink of losing her mind. The camera angle shows her face distorted by the inhuman suffering she is experiencing. Only a short while before she was a happy woman, now she is an old woman with wisps of grey hair protruding from under her scarf and a wandering gaze that cannot focus on anything.

An axe someone has dropped and left catches Pasha's eye and jolts her out of her grief. She takes it in her hands. Unforgettable scenes follow, showing a new page in Pasha's life and the life of other ordinary Soviet people like herself who become partisans, 'people's avengers'.

Pasha comes face to face with the nazi tank driver who killed her child, and her vengeance is merciless, but just.

Both movie-goers and critics praised this film. Soviet people were not 'passive resisters' to evil, but upheld a moral codex in which merciless revenge on one's enemies was justified.

The atrocities committed by the nazi invaders were unprecedented, at first they seemed unbelievable. 'How could this be?' people asked themselves. In the twentieth century, an era in which science, technology, and culture flourished — yet all these elderly people, women, children murdered, villages and towns wiped out with all their inhabitants. Vengeance was called for.

Nonetheless, it was pointed out that the film-makers had overestimated the significance of vengeance in the moral basis for the partisan movement, although partisans did call themselves 'the people's avengers'.

Apart from *She Defends Her Homeland*, critics also pointed out that vengeance was over-stressed in two other films that were released in war-time: *The Rainbow* (after W. Vasilevskaya's story) and *Man No. 217*.

*The Rainbow* was criticised for exceeding the limits of realistic art, for showing fascist atrocities in an overly naturalistic manner.

A nazi soldier aims his rifle at a group of children. The oldest, an eight-year-old boy, dashes from one little brother to another, covering them with his own body while the barrel of the rifle continues to move. Finally the soldier shoots—not at the children, but at a cuckoo-clock just as the cuckoo jumps out from its window.

In our opinion, the director was right. The life of any individual who fell into the power of the nazi invaders was terrifying. It is difficult to decide on the basis of individual episodes where the artist should have stopped in showing this unprecedented suffering. The most important thing is the result—the film in its entirety. The central figure of a genuine Ukrainian patriot, interpreted by Natalya Uzhvy, is the focal point in *The Rainbow*.

#### 4

Many films about the Second World War were also made in the post-war years. Taken as a whole, they make up one long fictional chronicle reflecting nearly all the major stages in the Soviet people's heroic struggle. This theme is indeed inexhaustible, and it is still one of the most important for our cinema today.

A number of films deal with the early stages of the war when the unexpected invasion by the nazi army led to temporary

enemy successes. Among these the most important was undoubtedly Aleksandr Stolper's two-part screen version of Konstantin Simonov's novel, *The Living and the Dead*.

*The Living and the Dead* tells of the war for three-and-a-half hours. There is no music at all in the film. Deafening explosions from shelling and bombing, the screech of dive-bombers, the clank of tank treads as they move into battle. And silence when the fighting briefly stops.

The fearful face of war is sometimes too 'everyday' in its impact. We see an endless flow of people move along dusty roads which were peaceful yesterday but now form part of the front-line. Old people and children, women, soldiers. The people have left their homes behind and are headed eastwards. But enemy tanks have arrived ahead of them. The road is already cut off by a large force of machine-gunners. Planes bearing black crosses circle in the sky over the road and forest. When they launched their aggression against the Soviet Union, the nazi leaders counted on a blitz. A massive strike by all possible means against the Soviet Army and the Soviet Union was meant to, in their plans, stun, demoralise, create panic and disorder, and bring about a total collapse of our country's defences and political and economic life. But the calculations made by the fascist strategists and politicians fail.

The artillery forces that marched hundreds of kilometres with their weapons from Brest on the enemy's heels, more than once engaging them in unequal battle, will never be forgotten. Only one gun with one last shell, only five soldiers beside a mound of earth above their dead commander's body is all that remained of one division. Their faces show their suffering, but without a trace of fear or submission to fate.

Nor will the sergeant-major who saved the singed and bullet-riddled division banner out of the flames of battle be forgotten. He cries as he unfurls it before the dying divisional commander. His tears contain pain, anger, and his resolve

to fight on till the end. And fight on he does. So deep is his hatred for the enemy that has come unbidden to our native soil that he takes on an enemy tank.

The film's plot encompasses many events and characters. The film-makers realised that it is difficult to reduce everything to one or two chief characters. They expressed it this way: 'Our hero is collective—the people, who fought and emerged triumphant. That is why we chose our actors very carefully; even minor roles were given to major actors, and it was especially pleasant to find that they agreed with our ideas.'

The first part of the film ends with a German tank attack. Lorries go crashing into a ditch. Enemy machine-gunners shoot down every living person. This is a picture of the early days of the war. The end of the film shows the Soviet winter campaign near Moscow in 1941. The road stretches out ahead in a ribbon. The roads already point westwards.

The film is saying that its heroes still have a long road ahead, one that leads straight to Berlin. The whole war is still ahead.

*The Living and the Dead* produced serious discussion among critics. Certain critics, both Soviet and foreign—those who are friendly towards the Soviet Union—said that the film was too one-sided, that it leant too much on the dark side and did not include other aspects that would have made it more realistic. This impression was reinforced by the fact that other film-makers who also chose this theme frequently made works about the first stages of the war. In fact, it is true that audiences in our country and abroad received a somewhat distorted impression of the war from Soviet films.

Many foreign films have also been made about the nazi occupation and the struggle against fascism. A number of them are well-made, artistically powerful, truthful films.

But often these films showed events in an atmosphere of fatality and hopelessness. The main characters fought and carried out their duty honourably, but their minds were incapable of seeing through the long, difficult years ahead of Hitler's domination.

These films were made after the defeat of fascism, but nonetheless they aimed less at truth than at giving an aesthetically refined picture of the sombre atmosphere dominating these years, heightening it, and expressing their own pessimism and lack of faith in man, in his ability not only to be steadfast in struggle, but also to understand what was happening. This theme of man's 'alienation' from life and events which remain incomprehensible to him, is a common theme in Western art. The central character in such works is depicted not as an active figure, but as a passive object. The predominant tone in films of this type is that of pathos, and it contains neither respect for nor faith in man.

A certain lack of definition in film-makers' ideas can also be seen in a number of Soviet films about the war. Some of them have unquestionable good points, but only in terms of individual aspects, not their over-all interpretation of the material at hand.

This is particularly true of Andrei Tarkovsky's film, *Ivan's Childhood*, about an orphaned adolescent adopted by a military unit who then carries out courageous reconnaissance work. A similar situation was the basis of an earlier film entitled *Son of the Regiment* adapted from a story by Valentin Kataev. But in the case of *Ivan's Childhood*, the film-makers were evidently striving to treat the material in a new way, to shift emphasis to the psychological side of events. By means of heavy exaggeration, they tried to show that although Ivan made his contribution to the common cause, he becomes embittered in the course of the struggle as a result of the enormous burden placed on his young shoulders. A psychological displacement occurs in him. In the final analysis, all this is intended to illustrate the idea that war causes everyone—adults and children alike—suffering and the loss of something irreplaceable.

The artificiality of the film's inner structure is immediately noticeable; it is an organic defect that all its individual good

points (expressive camerawork, accurate depiction of certain details of military life, etc.) cannot conceal.

The common idea underlying all such works—and more than a few have been made in our country—is not particularly profound. It can be formulated as ‘War makes men suffer’. But everyone knows this. Films like *Ivan's Childhood* always leave audiences feeling somehow unsatisfied. We should expect greater civil, philosophical, and political maturity from an artist—regardless of which form of art he may work in. If he lacks this, then he has no moral right to demand the attention of millions of movie-goers.

Certain recent films display another trait in common: to make central characters out of people of a markedly non-heroic cast who are depicted as ‘little men’—unnoticeable and insignificant. There were even some such films about the Second World War. In such cases the film-makers are guided by a desire to make a film that is totally different, even radically opposed to ‘traditional’ works on heroic themes. This polemical striving usually led the film-makers far astray from a truthful portrayal of life. Their films were very rightly short-lived and were forgotten before they even left the screen. The films that have stood the test of time are those that have heroes with outstanding moral qualities and great strength of will, men who are true patriots.

A true man shows his best qualities when he is severely tested—is the message of the film *A Story About a Real Man*, adapted from a story by Boris Polevoy, one of the most popular books among Soviet youth.

After his plane is shot down in an air battle, a seriously wounded pilot makes his way through a forest on occupied territory. Both his legs are broken. Every movement causes him great suffering. To make his way to the Soviet lines he must crawl fifty snow-bound kilometres. Naturally, in a situation like this a man's instinct comes to his aid. But this is not enough, he needs great will-power, the ability to be a man in any circumstances, to fight to the last breath.



The pilot crawled the fifty kilometres to the Soviet front-line. But he lost use of both legs. He could simply reconcile himself to his lot — after all, he carried out his duty honourably and he still might live a useful life as other men have done in similar circumstances. But Alexei Meresyev thinks differently. He decides to return to active service. This is very hard, indeed — he must overcome all the circumstances on his path, the inertia of his own nature, he must be able to be angry with his own weakness, to feel stronger than his weaknesses.

Help comes in the form of the injured commissar Vorobyov. He gives Alexei a magazine with an article about the Russian pilot Karpovich, who lost use of one leg, yet returned to active service.

‘But he only lost use of one leg. I’ve lost both,’ Alexei replies.

‘But you are a Soviet man, Aleksei,’ says the commissar.

Actor P. Kadochnikov interpreted this role in an outwardly very simple, straight-forward manner. The significance of Meresyev’s feat is not only that he was able to achieve the impossible by great strength of will and return to service. His feat was grand and beautiful in itself, for it showed the limitless possibilities for the perfection of human nature and offered a splendid example of the strength of the human will.

This theme was also the central idea in *The Fate of a Man*, directed by that talented actor and director, Sergei Bondarchuk, from a story of the same name by Mikhail Sholokhov.

Here the truth is external—in details and individual incidents, and, more important, internal—the source of Andrei Sokolov’s steadfastness, first as a prisoner-of-war, then as a demobilized soldier.

Sokolov’s fate is unusual in the number of physical and moral torments that fall to his lot. His is a harder fate than the heroes of many war films, for he spends two years in a nazi concentration camp.

A column of prisoners-of-war is being herded towards a concentration camp. Trainloads of civilians are also delivered here from the occupied territories. Everything in the camp

is carefully planned and thought out. A band is playing, calm, businesslike voices explain the camp rules in various languages over the loud-speakers. The new arrivals are sorted out and lined up, masculine women in uniform take children away from their mothers. And an endless human river flows towards the crematorium ovens...

The most important thing in Sholokhov's story—and Bondarchuk retains this in the film—is its disclosure of the unwavering steadfastness displayed by a man, a soldier. This cannot be explained simply. It represents an entire world-view and philosophy of life. Sokolov courageously withstands all the hardships that befall him in the firm belief that it is his human duty to bear through to the end. Superficially, this might seem reconciliation to fate, but in fact it represents an enormous strength. The most dramatic moment in the film is the scene in which Sokolov is summoned to the camp commandant. The prisoners already know what the outcome will be. When drunk, the sadistic officers like to amuse themselves in tormenting the prisoners. Now it is Sokolov's turn. 'I felt somehow sorry for Irina and the kids, then I got over it and began screwing up my courage to face the barrel of that pistol without flinching, like a soldier should, so the enemy wouldn't see how hard it'd be for me at the last minute to part with this life (Mikhail Sholokhov, *The Fate of a Man*.)

The commandant asks Sokolov if one cubic metre of earth is enough to make a grave for him. Andrei has already reconciled himself to the fact that he must die and he has only one wish—to die with dignity, to remain a man to the end. And so he answers with unexpected light-heartedness, even humour: 'Of course, quite enough and to spare!' Commandant Müller does not expect this. He offers the prisoner a drink before he dies. Sokolov picks up his glass. 'To the victory of German arms? Thank you for your hospitality, but I don't drink.' Nonetheless, he drinks to his death and relief from torment.

A duel takes place between Müller and Sokolov. The prisoner

has drunk, but refuses to touch the food. 'I drank a second glass, too, and again refused to have a bite to eat...' After the third glass, Sokolov bit off a tiny bit of bread and put the rest down on the table. 'I wanted to show them, the bastards, that even though I may be dying of hunger, I wasn't going to choke myself with the scraps they flung me, that I have my own, Russian dignity and pride, and they hadn't turned me into an animal, no matter how hard they try...'

The film version of *The Fate of a Man* won the Grand Prix at the Moscow International Film Festival, which bore the motto: 'For humanism in cinema, for peace and friendship between peoples.' The film was praised highly by film critics and audiences throughout the world. Its artistic virtues were also noted: its rich expressive means and its innovative camera-work, which subtly conveyed the hero's subjective perceptions.

Director Grigori Chukhrai's *Ballad of a Soldier* (1959) also received many awards at film festivals. Like *A Story About a Real Man* and *The Fate of a Man*, this film focused on one central character, who was depicted in detail, in close-up, so to speak. Chukhrai's film was also on the theme Man at War.

Some critics see the central figure, Alyosha Skvortsov, as embodying the Russian national character. Alyosha is very responsive to others' misfortunes, they point out, for he spends his six-day home leave in helping people he meets along the way. What is more, we learn at the very beginning of the film that he later dies in a battle to liberate a neighbouring country.

The Soviet people do truly have a self-sacrificing, magnanimous nature. On the eve of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the defeat of nazi Germany, Marshal of the Soviet Union, G. Zhukov stressed in an interview with a reporter from *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper that it was this magnanimity that made Soviet soldiers so humane in their treatment of the defeated enemy, whose atrocities against both prisoners-of-war and civilians in the occupied areas clearly called for the most severe vengeance.

In *Ballad of a Soldier*, the hero is shown as a member of the liberating army who embodies the finest moral qualities associated with socialist humanism. After we have gotten to know Alyosha on the screen, we clearly understand how much he could have done for people if his life had been longer.

However, critics also expressed some reservations. It was pointed out that although Alyosha is a soldier, he is not really shown as such in the film. True, in the opening scene he knocks out an enemy tank, but this is only shown fleetingly, and the real significance of this scene is to explain to the audience why a front-line soldier is given home-leave right in the middle of continuing battles.

However, the film-makers did not aim to create a full portrait of the Soviet soldier. 'We did not want to contrast our film with other films about the war, we wanted it to complement them,' said director Chukhrai about his *Ballad of a Soldier*.

The chief ideological virtue of this film was that it showed millions of foreign movie-goers whom imperialist propaganda constantly bombards with the supposed threat emanating from the socialist states the moral nature of Soviet patriotism. *Ballad of a Soldier* convincingly answered the question, 'Do the Russians want war?', that many people abroad ask. This was a major factor behind the enormous number of prizes the film received at international film festivals.

It is very characteristic of Soviet cinema that its best films draw their material from life itself, from historical events and facts, and that their heroes are real-life figures. This is particularly true of films about the Second World War.

The prototype for the hero of *A Story About a Real Man* was a real person, a famous pilot and Hero of the Soviet Union, in our day a noted public figure, as well. Only one letter in his last name was changed in the book and in the film.

Georgian writer S. Zhgenti, who wrote the script for the film *A Soldier's Father*, also met his hero in real life, at the front lines.

A middle-aged, yet vigorous Georgian peasant, a grape-

grower from Kakhetia, sets off to see his wounded son in a military hospital. With a sack tossed over his shoulder, clumsy and somehow a bit funny in his peasant's clothes, Georgy Makharashvili unexpectedly finds himself in a war zone.

Having seen war with his own eyes, he decides to become a soldier and join the army on its push towards Berlin.

This film acquired wide popularity, was shown around the world, and won many awards. Sergei Zakariadze, who performed in the main role, was awarded the Lenin Prize.

Many reviews and articles have been written about *A Soldier's Father*, and they discuss the film very fully. However, some critics—in our opinion—see this deeply realistic work somewhat one-sidedly; they see Georgy Makharashvili as a sort of abstract peace-maker who, even after he becomes a soldier, makes war on war. Two episodes in particular are always referred to: during an artillery attack, Georgy uses his own jacket to put out a fire that has started in a grain-field as a result of an exploding shell; in another episode, he blocks a Soviet tank that is about to roll over a vineyard in a German village.

These episodes, especially the second one, have a deep meaning, but they are not decisive moments in the film as a whole. Of course, the peasant Georgy is against any 'wastage', even in war. He grew up in a village, has spent his entire life cultivating fields and vineyards, and he respects man's labour invested in the soil. Even in the most savage situations, of which there are many in wartime, he never gives way to destructive impulses and stubbornly tries to prevent destructiveness in others. If a man does not keep a close check on himself, he may not maintain his inner self when he runs up against blatant cruelty.

This is indeed one side to Georgy, but not the only one, not is it his main feature. Georgy is above all a soldier. His age excludes him from call-up, and he had to be very stubborn in order to become, first a fighter in a partisan detachment, and then a soldier in the regular army. But after he has seen

with his own eyes how the nazi troops behave on Soviet soil, how they kill civilians and destroy what men have created and cultivated with their own hands, Georgy is overwhelmed with hatred for the invaders, and this hatred leads him to become a soldier, even though he is already advanced in years. Perhaps his most important trait is that he not only knows how to love, but also how to hate.

The best episode in Yulia Solntseva's film *The Enchanted Desna-River* (script written by Aleksandr Dovzhenko) develops this important idea further.

The soldiers and officers of a unit fight their way out of an encirclement and are making their way from one bank of a river to the opposite bank. The elderly ferryman who is taking them across speaks bitterly and harshly to them. 'I couldn't listen to the old man,' the narrator says, 'It was too unpleasant. He just seemed cruel and unfair at the time.'

'Don't you know how hard it is for us, old man? Do you think our hearts don't ache with pain and pity, that we aren't going through the fires of hell inside?' I groaned into his ear.

"What am I supposed to think," Platon said, looking at me. "You're supposed to think. Life is yours, not mine. I'll just say one thing to you in parting: you're looking at it the wrong way. You feel pain and sadness. But that's not what you're supposed to be feeling. That's for women. A soldier today should be filled with fierce anger and hatred for the enemy. That's your job. Pain and pity are no use to you. Pity eats away at a man like a worm. Men who are swift and angry will win, not those who feel pity," said Platon and then fell silent. He had expressed his idea at last. That was his right. He went up onto the poop, severe and splendid, and looked over our heads into the distance.'

Dovzhenko thought a great deal about people who have 'an enormous ability to give of themselves' and a special talent for life.

'The world war ended. I stand with my machine-gun on the eve of a new era and think: what a powerful, evil force

we defeated, damn them.' This is the opening to Dovzhenko's film, *A Tale of the Flaming Years*.

A young sergeant, tall and strong, his head wrapped in bandages, unshaven, wet, covered in the dust and soot of Berlin, stands by the Brandenburg Gates. Thinking out loud, he says with a smile: 'I'm just an ordinary sergeant, Ivan Orlyuk, a collective farmer from the Dnieper region, a perfectly ordinary victor in the world war, so to speak. But since so many soldiers like me were struck down in battle to liberate the people from fascism, more than any other soldiers in the world, and I myself shed blood and worked hard, I—a man born to do good—should somehow introduce myself to my contemporaries, my friends and enemies throughout the world, along with my wife and children, my father and mother, my entire home, even with the well from which I used to drink water, with my yard and kitchen garden, where I first got calloused hands—in short, to introduce all that is near and dear to me and all that makes up my destiny.'

In situations like this, Dovzhenko does not give the person individual speech characteristics, for these thoughts are silent, perhaps not even formulated inside him, only sensed. Instead, the artist conveys them 'in his own words'. The whole of *A Tale of the Flaming Years* is told in this 'lofty', exalted style.

Orlyuk returns to Kiev with the troops. An historical battle takes place, the forcing of the Dnieper. He is seriously wounded, and his doctors have already given up hope. As he lies dying on his hospital cot, the doctors turn and walk away. He is pale and swathed from head to foot in bandages, but he is young and does not want to die.

In defiance of all biological and medical laws, he gets up from his cot. His strength pushed him across the boundary of the impossible.

Audiences are right to accept this scene in the psychological sense as a realistic depiction of an exceptional happening, but such miracles did happen more than once during the war.

Man's will-power, his striving to live and struggle, his strength

of mind, his purity and single-mindedness, and his inner — not yet fully explored — reserves for controlling his own body — all of these factors save Orlyuk's life.

Standing in the doorway of the operating theatre with his bloodstained bandages, drenched in a cold sweat, he shouts: 'Change my bandages! I want to live. Give me clean bandages and everything else I've a right to...' — and he walks unsteadily towards the operating table. Dovzhenko remarked here: 'The strength of this dying man's resistance to death gave strength to the doctor, too, and the doctor gave this strength back to his patient a hundred-fold.'

Another script by Dovzhenko, not yet brought to the screen, is entitled *The Discovery of the Antarctic*. In it, a ship is about to hit an iceberg, but one of its sailors believes that 'his muscles and nerves, all his passion and will to live, all of his life-force and joyful being' intensified to the degree of the hurricane around him, will make the sea — if only once in a lifetime — submit to the rhythm of his harmonic soul.

The plan for one of Dovzhenko's unfinished scripts about a space-flight also hints at this idea of Dovzhenko's that man's strength of will can subordinate everything to itself. The astronauts are making for Mars. However, a miscalculation is made in preparations for the flight, and the rocket flies through space for more than eight years, 'catching up' with our planet. What takes place on earth during this time?

Maria — the wife or fiancé of one of the astronauts — waits eight years, watching the heavens every day. 'Her hair turned grey, yet she remained young. The force of her hope made time stand still.'

Strong-willed people, who possess 'that most difficult power to achieve' — power over themselves — believe, and it seems that their will-power really does accomplish miracles in the strictest sense of the word.

Dovzhenko gave all of his creative life to people who were capable of great feats, of experiencing 'sacred moments'. He understood a great deal about such people. But not



everything. Again and again he made them the heroes of his works so that, using his creative powers to penetrate to the heart of things, he could increase his understanding of this great secret.

## 6.

Films about 'fighters on the invisible front', i.e. intelligence officers, have always been highly popular. Many of these films fascinate audiences by their unusual plot twists, which make the viewer guess, construct hypotheses, thus involving him actively in the events.

Lately, films in this genre have come to be derived from documental sources, and their similarity to detective films is relegated to secondary importance. Film-makers are more interested in the central characters themselves, and human character and psychology in general. That is the now-dominant trend in Soviet films of this type.

*The Strong-Willed* tells about the patriot-hero, intelligence officer Nikolai Kuznetsov. This was the second time his biography had been treated on the screen. Boris Barnet's film *An Intelligence Officer's Feat* (1947) was based on the real facts of Kuznetsov's story. Unfortunately, the scenes and details added to fill out the bare facts seem much too contrived today. Nonetheless, the film's general effect, its poetry and romanticism, have remained fresh across the years. They guarantee this film a long life. *The Strong-Willed* aims at being more strictly documental and offers us more facts about this amazing man. His unusual linguistic abilities, his sensitive 'phonetic' ear enable him to learn German from German specialists while working at one of the Ural factories. He masters the language perfectly, including several of the many German dialects.

Just before New Year 1943, we see Kuznetsov again in occupied Vinnitsa in the midst of nazi officers, wearing the uniform of a German senior lieutenant and sporting an Iron Cross.

The Germans are planning an operation to recoup their defeat at Stalingrad, operation 'Citadel'. Troops are being concentrated near Kursk. The film makes wide use of documentary footage from this period. Unfortunately, they do not merge successfully with the acted scenes.

Today many facts from Kuznetsov's biography are well known: his attempt to locate Hitler's general headquarters in the Ukraine, the preparations for the murder of Gauleiter Koch, and murder of Hauptprokuror Funk, etc. The filmmakers had to fill out these facts with details from their own imaginative resources, but unfortunately they were not up to the mark in this respect. The film had too many long, overdrawn scenes inserted only for purposes of explanation, as well as too many scenes showing 'daily life'. Too much time was devoted to outwardly dynamic scenes showing chases and shoot-outs, when the most important thing — the source of the heroes' courage — was not touched on at all.

Latvian actor Gunar Tsilinsky, who played the main role, bore a marked physical resemblance to Kuznetsov. Certain of Kuznetsov's character traits were also well portrayed. The relations between the hero and a Polish officer's widow, acted by Viya Artmane, were also depicted in an interesting manner.

We see Kuznetsov in the enemy's midst nearly all the time. He needed to be not only a first-class actor, but also capable of quickly improvising the only viable solution in what would seem a hopeless situation, to quell the enemy's growing suspicions, to subtly direct his opponents' thoughts in the direction required. This was shown convincingly.

*The Road to 'Saturn'* and its sequel *The End of 'Saturn'* (director V. Azarov) also recreate real-life events on the screen. *The History of the Great Patriotic War* describes these events thus: 'Agents of the state security organs penetrated the intelligence unit "Abwehrcommando 103" which had been carrying out subversive activities at the Moscow Front, and obtained information about 127 German intelligence agents trained to infiltrate, or already infiltrated, into the Soviet rear...'

The first days of the war. Footage from a German daily newsreel shown to the German population in the summer of 1941: nazi units conduct a victorious offensive and force a major river. Happy soldiers remove their helmets and march ahead, almost like tourists. The film's narrator cynically announces: 'Soldiers! Europe's fate is in your hands. May God give you strength...'

Subversive agents trained in special schools were infiltrated into Soviet troops at this time. One of the schools is called 'Saturn'. Soviet intelligence knows very little about it. Captain Krylov is given a difficult assignment to penetrate it as a deserter. Three men have failed before him.

Actor Mikhail Volkov, who plays Sergei Krylov, adds psychological subtlety to the art of intelligence, a task requiring an intense effort with all the abilities man has.

The film displays many fine performances. Georgy Gai acts the role of a former Soviet officer, Andropov, whose cowardice has turned him into a traitor, but who nevertheless finds the strength to do what he can for his country. Another outstanding performance is given by V. Kashpur who has the role of Krylov's only 'connection', a man pretending to be a petty 'trader' of sorts.

The most outstanding performance is that of General Timerin, played by that distinguished and popular actor, Georgy Zhzhenov.

General Timerin is a fascinating character for many reasons. He is a straight-forward, with a hint of simple-mindedness, a type frequently encountered in films of the thirties; but something very human can be sensed in his simplicity — frankness, a trusting nature, a certain inner generosity. He cannot abide any stiffness or pomposity, which he hastens to put down with an ironic remark or a joke.

General Drobot (played by Evgeni Kuznetsov) is General Timerin's colleague, but in every other respect — his attitude towards his work, life, and people — he is his exact opposite. The most important thing for him is to carry out orders so

that he cannot be reproached for anything. He is distrustful, lacks any understanding of people, and deep in his heart he is very cynical about his fellow men.

The end of the war is still far away, but experienced German military leaders, including the very head of the Abwehr, Canaris, already foresee the outcome of events and that their side is losing. The only thing they do not understand is why this should be so. 'What is the secret behind the Russians' courage and success?' they ask, without being able to provide an answer. However, they are already building up a network of agents who will go into action after the war. In other words, they are not reconciled to defeat and intend to pave the way for new military adventures...

## 7.

The war against nazi Germany was carried on by all the people; battles took place not only at the front, but at the rear, in occupied territory.

In February 1943, Soviet Army units liberated the mining village, Krasnodon, and we learned of the underground Communist youth organisation, the 'Young Guard'. The history of this organisation served as the basis for a novel of the same name by Aleksandr Fadeev. The writer carefully studied all the documents and wrote an outstanding literary work. Sergei Gerasimov, one of the most talented Soviet directors, brought this novel to the screen.

The film created a collective portrait of Soviet youth, that outstanding generation whose character was formed by the Revolution. They reflected the vitality of Soviet society and the people's inner strength, the earnest of their inevitable victory over the enemy.

The young people in the film are not abstract do-gooders, but people with individual traits, virtues and defects, personal strivings and desires. The sober Oleg Koshevoy, the restrained Ulyana Gromova, the courageous, steadfast Sergei Tyulenin,

the bubbling, life-loving Lyuba Shevtsova, the shy, business-like Vanya Zemnukhov, the tender, courageous Valentina Borts, the calm and collected Ivan Turkenich.

The actors truly seem to live their parts. This life-like quality is no accident, however: Gerasimov cast actors who were close to the age of the young guards and whose biographies were somewhat similar. Vladimir Ivanov, who played Oleg Koshevoy, had been commander of an intelligence unit; actress Nonna Mordyukova, who acted the role of Ulya Gromova (a teenager at the time), had helped the partisans. Sergei Bondarchuk, who was given his first role in this film — the part of Valko — had also been in the war, and Gleb Romanov (Turkenich in the film) had been a driver at the front lines.

The Young Guard underground organisation was not the only one of its kind. Wherever there were nazi occupation forces — in the Ukrainian cities and villages, in Byelorussia, in the Russian provinces, in Moldavia, and in the Baltic states — partisans and underground groups offered fierce resistance.

The film *Maryte* told of the Lithuanian heroine, Maria Melnykaite, Hero of the Soviet Union. The title role was memorably played by T. Lennikova. Lithuanian critics observed that the young actress was able to combine poetic dream and unusual courage, steadfastness and passion, traits which were dominant in this unforgettable Lithuanian girl's character.

Script-writer F. Knorre, who had written *Maryte*, also wrote the script for *Rita*, which director A. Neretnieks filmed in Riga.

A Latvian fisherman risks his life to save four prisoners — a Russian, a Frenchman, and two Latvians — from a transport ship that goes down at sea. He is captured by the nazis and pays dearly for this act, but the prisoners-of-war he has saved are successfully hidden in an attic by the local population.

Rita is an ordinary girl with braids, a turned-up nose, and curious eyes. But she also contains great inner strength. Young actress I. Gulbe handled this difficult role magnificently. She

is convincing from beginning to end right from the first scene showing her deceiving the nazi searchers, to the last scene when Soviet troops chase the nazis out of her home town.

Soviet patriots also fought the nazis in the occupied European countries, including in the very heartland of fascism — nazi Germany, where the twists of military fate brought them.

The basis of *The Skylark* was a real event. At the very height of the war, the nazis tested new shells to be used against armoured vehicles in the very heart of Germany, shooting at captured Soviet tanks with their prisoner-of-war crews inside them. During these tests one tank manages to escape before the very eyes of the German specialists thanks to the courage and skill of its driver, a captured Soviet tank-driver, who slipped out from under fire and escaped to freedom together with the rest of the crew: three Russians and a Frenchman.

The tank stops on a town square dominated by a statue of Siegfried, slowly turns around and heads towards this nazi militarist symbol. A moment later only a pile of rubble remains in place of the monument.

This Russian tank enforces justice and vengeance. It seems to multiply before the nazis' very eyes, and panic spreads through the small towns at the enemy's rear.

The tank-driver's fighting friends fight and die heroes' deaths. Only he remains alive. Then he sees a child lying on the narrow road in front of his tank. A middle-aged German covers his eyes... A short burst of automatic fire rings out. Ivan, who has climbed out of the tank to carry the child to the roadside, falls to the ground. As the Russian soldier who has saved a German child falls, looking at the sky, we again see the stricken German's face. The truth hits him squarely in the eyes: the German has understood why the soldier who has shot this Russian will not emerge victorious, but the country whose soldiers save other people's children at the height of the war.

The material on which *Exploded Inferno* (directed by I. Lukinsky) was based was highly dramatic.

The German army is successfully advancing. Thousands of Soviet soldiers have been taken prisoner. A group of German officers travel around the prisons and concentration camps, examining the prisoners and selecting some to be sent to Germany. In Weimar, where Goethe lived, a special school trains Soviet prisoners-of-war as subversive agents and intelligence officers who will then be infiltrated into the Soviet army. In the school all the prisoners are given pseudonyms, and the plot is centered on the prisoner who is now known as Skvorchevsky (acted by G. Bortnikov).

In the camp where prisoners-of-war were put to work in the quarry, 'Skvorchevsky' had been advised, or more correctly ordered, by his Soviet underground political leader to agree to go to this school.

'Better to die in undeserved disgrace, yet to do everything you can for your country...' he was advised. And further, 'There will be two men you can trust there. But you'll have to find them yourself...'

A testing period follows. A typical nazi newsreel is shown: the Russian population ecstatically welcomes nazi troops to their town, a priest blesses them with a cross. Endless columns of downcast Soviet prisoners-of-war...

No one trusts anyone else at the school. Everyone is afraid, suspicious, trying to sound out the others. One of the men can't take it and hangs himself, leaving behind a note that says: 'Damn all of you, you scum, traitors...' There are, of course, real scum in the school, as well as men who have lost all hope and who go on living only through inertia.

'Who are the two men I can trust?' Skvorchevsky wonders. He makes cautious hints, a few bitter jokes, and throws out heavily-veiled ironies... Then the training comes to an end. Now the men must take the oath of allegiance to Hitler.

'You speak as if you represent some kind of power,' one of his 'friends' remarks in amazement.

'A very great one—my country,' he thinks to himself. Skvorchevsky passes himself off to the Germans as a man

who despises the crowd. Having separated the men he can trust from the scum, he sends them off into occupied territory with microfilm copies of secret documents. He himself agrees to remain behind as a teacher in the school. This way he can accomplish more. And so he will, even if his country knows nothing about it.

It is the spring of 1944. The débacle of the nazi military machine is close at hand. The Germans themselves sense this, as do the Soviet prisoners-of-war who are labouring in camps along the Atlantic Ocean. This atmosphere is successfully conveyed in a film entitled *Far to the West* (dir. A. Faintsimer). The plot is sparse and does not strive for big effects; it tells of the feat performed by Russians, Georgians, and Frenchmen, who capture and blow up a fort on an island in the so-called 'Atlantic Rampart' which the nazis set up to defend the French coast.

This film has its defects. The battle scenes, for instance, look like military ballets in places. Victory seems to be handed on a silver platter to the prisoners-of-war, and organising men who are vastly different from each other and have complex, contradictory biographies is effected much too easily.

The film is consciously simplified. It avoids details and treats one of the war's heroic episodes in only very general terms. Therefore the traditional narrative form of the story is basically justified. Other films about the war may not make a satisfactory impression because they are not severe or simple enough, because their directors try to fill them out with trivial formal effects bearing little relation to the main theme.

*Far to the West* attempts, although very modestly, to depict important characters. These are, first of all, the political leader Karpov (acted by V. Safonov) and the colonel, played by N. Kryuchkov, both vivid Russian characters, courageous, ingenious men, with an inner honesty and nobility of spirit that is noticeable in their every movement and attracts men of every stripe to them.



Another of the film's virtues is that it shows in a very realistic, though general, manner the unity of spirit among honest men of different nationalities: men who take part in the French Resistance — Frenchmen, Russian, and Georgians are shown to be members of the fraternity of mankind...

With the passage of time, we learn more and more about our countrymen who fought against fascism together with patriots of France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Norway, and other countries. It is to be hoped that film-makers will continue to make films about these heroes.

Friendship between the Soviet peoples and peoples of other countries was strengthened in the tense, prolonged struggle against fascism. Many films made in our country and abroad by Soviet film-makers, in association with their colleagues in Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Rumania, France, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia deal with this subject.

The film *Normandy-Neman* made by Soviet and French film-makers recreates the war-time story of a squadron, later the air-force regiment 'Normandy-Neman' in which French pilots fought against the nazis on the Soviet front lines during the war. The script was based on memoirs written by participants and their log of military operations; the history of the unit from its very beginning, when 16 French pilots formed a flying detachment in Teheran, to the final battles in the sky above eastern Prussia, is recorded with fastidious attention to its accuracy. The scenes shot in the air are excellent, yet the viewers' emotions are more deeply affected by the more outwardly modest scenes describing life at the front. Gradually one understands what brought these very different people together in this difficult year.

The fall of France humiliated and infuriated every patriotic Frenchman. The 'Normandy-Neman' squadron became a symbol of undefeated, fighting France. The French actors skilfully conveyed the character traits of their heroic countrymen, many of whom had fallen in battle. Although their

characters were very different, each of them had a certain knight-like nobility, and unflinching courage in the face of danger and death. One episode in particular is very touching, when the French pilot De Bouassy dies in an attempt to save his mechanic's life.

*Normandy-Neman* tells with great feeling of the fighting friendship between Soviet and French pilots that became a part of our two peoples' history.

The theme of international cooperation that developed particularly in the last stage of the war was the main theme in the Soviet-Rumanian film, *The Tunnel*, which told of how four Russians and two Rumanians died heroically carrying out their military assignment—to prevent the retreating nazis from blowing up a major railway tunnel in the mountains of Transylvania.

The Soviet-Polish film, *Zosia*, an unusual film among those made about the war, was also very popular with audiences. The war as such is hardly shown here for it is drawing to an end. Soviet troops are already in Poland and will soon be in Berlin.

The entire film is structured in the form of a young lieutenant's diary. His sub-unit has halted for a few days in a Polish village. They get to know the villagers, the people in whose home they are billeted, and their daughter Zosia. The young lieutenant and Zosia fall in love. Everything might seem perfectly ordinary if we only looked at the sequence of events: they meet a few times by accident and exchange a few words; then an alert is given and the lieutenant goes away. That is the entire plot of the film. However, the film-makers were able to convey the development of this love and to use the screen's possibilities to the maximum. *Zosia* is very much a film of today in its stylistic means and visual dynamism.

Among international co-productions, we should mention *Five Days, Five Nights* (Mosfilm and DEFA Studios).

The plot is based on real events. Soviet soldiers saved priceless paintings from the Dresden Gallery, then Soviet restorers worked on those that were damaged, and then they were returned to the German Democratic Republic.

While sticking to the documental basis, the directors (Leo Arnshtam from Mosfilm and Wolfgang Ebeling from DEFA) also used their artistic license to show the political, philosophical, and human meaning of this event.

Around the central event itself we see the figures of Soviet soldiers, officers, and German civilians. An interesting part of the story concerns German artist Paul Naumann and the story of his spiritual rebirth. The horrors of war that Naumann has lived through have desiccated his heart. The world has lost its harmony for him, and his art would have travelled a path that could only lead to a dead-end, if it were not for liberation from the nazis. Naumann as a man and an artist is a typical bourgeois intellectual, an artist cut off from historical truth and his people's fate.

It is only a matter of hours, not days, until the war's end. Then it is several days after it has officially ended. As they retreat, the nazi troops may destroy a treasure-house of world art. A treasure-house not only because many of the Dresden Gallery's paintings cost enormous sums of money. The Soviet soldiers and officers who hunt down the hidden paintings are not interested in this aspect of their value. They are risking their lives for another reason. The canvases painted by Raphael, Rubens, and Rembrandt are priceless because mankind's moral ideals are contained in them, ideals by which men shall orientate themselves in their long and difficult path into the future.

## 8.

A number of million-dollar films have been made in Europe and America in recent years about the Second World War. Several countries took part in production of *The Longest Day*, an epic about the opening of the second front in Europe.

This enormous film deals with one day in the war: June 6, 1944, when Allied troops landed in the north of France.

This film shows the defeat of nazi Germany as if the decisive role in the war was not the Soviet people's feat, or the European people's resistance to fascism, but the landing of Anglo-American troops in Normandy, i.e. the 'second front' that was only opened after Soviet soldiers had paid with their blood for their decisive victories over fascism, had driven the nazis from Soviet territory and were closing in on the last nazi stronghold...

The facts in *The Longest Day* were skilfully falsified and the role of the Soviet Army simply ignored, as if it had not even participated in the war against nazi Germany.

It might seem as if *The Longest Day* only deals with one episode in the war, and any one film does not necessarily have to reflect the whole scope of the war. However, knowing the real state of things, and taking into account that people in many countries, especially in Africa, Asia, and even Latin America are still poorly informed about the war, it becomes clear how dishonest such propaganda attempts are.

Despite its documental air and seeming adherence to the truth, *The Longest Day* follows all the traditional Hollywood canons. It is obvious that the film is aimed at a low intellectual level. It grandly announces that several thousand American and French soldiers took part in the battle scenes, as well as many boats from the American Sixth Fleet, and that fifty-seven famous film stars play roles in it. In fact, each of the famous actors flashes onto the screen for a few seconds, and their casting is totally unnecessary apart from contributing to the movie's box-office drawing power. In the grand old Hollywood tradition, the film-makers are less concerned with the truth than with producing the necessary effect on the audience.

If we are to believe *The Longest Day*, the successful Allied landing in northern France depended not on the Soviet Army, but on the fact that Hitler had taken a sleeping pill the night

before, leaving the nazi troops without leadership, confused, and vulnerable. This frivolous, anecdotal approach is an attempt to separate the German Army High Command from the nazi leadership and thus 'rehabilitate' the German military.

We appreciate the true value of the contribution made by other peoples to the victory over fascism. 'A mighty anti-nazi coalition took shape in the course of the war,' we read in the Theses of the CPSU Central Committee on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution: 'Powerful blows were dealt the enemy by the armies of the Western Allies. A courageous fight was put up by the allied troops of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the participants in the Resistance movement. However, the main burden of the war was borne by the Soviet people and their heroic army, who played a decisive role in the victory over Hitler Germany.'\*

The new Soviet film, *Liberation*, tells millions of people across the world the real truth about the war, recreating not only facts, but what is more important — their essence, their historical meaning, which should never be forgotten.

This epic embraces a fairly short space of time; from the end of March, 1943 when operation 'Citadel', a decisive military plan in the opinions of the nazi generals, was worked out in Wolfschanze — the nazi underground fortress — to the raising of the victorious Soviet flag over the Reichstag, right up to Victory Day, May 9, 1945. The epic's grandeur lies not in the space of time it covers, but in the world-wide importance of the events it depicts.

Naturally, one studios alone was insufficient to realise the vast scale of a project of this type. And so, apart from the Soviet film-makers, participation was also provided by Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, the German Democra-

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\* *Fiftieth Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution*, (Theses of the Central Committee of the CPSU), Moscow, 1970, pp. 19-20.

tic Republic, Rumania, and Italy. Many political events from this period are depicted in this epic, which consists of five parts: the Warsaw and Prague uprisings, the partisan struggle in Yugoslavia, the arrest and execution of Mussolini, and the generals' plot against Hitler.

The most important thing, however, are the portraits of Soviet soldiers, officers, and generals—all those who overcame enormous difficulties and paid great sacrifices to liberate the world from fascism.

Having met with defeat at Moscow and Stalingrad, the nazis were preparing for a new onslaught that was to be the turning point of a whole 'Eastern campaign'.

The first film in the epic, *The Fiery Bulge*, told of the great battle at the Kursk bulge, Oryol, and Belgorod when the scales were finally tipped decisively in favour of the Soviet Army. Its style is that of an historical chronicle, recreating events precisely, and therefore documental footage from the war years merges smoothly with the fictional material.

On June 5, 1943 at 5 a.m. the still, silent field behind the barbed wire does not seem a battlefield. But the camera's eye sees beyond outer appearances: army engineers are crawling along the ground and cutting the barbed wire with scissors. They are Soviet reconnaissance men out in search of 'an informant'. Their assay is successful, they take prisoner a German soldier. During questioning he answers strangely: he is arrogant and insolent, but he indicates the exact hour at which the German offensive is to begin. Can he be believed?

This question is examined at length at the very highest level with dozens of the commanders who take part in the debate. We see the Military Council meet again and again. Externally these scenes are static and low-key, but inwardly they have a dynamism of their own, the dynamism of decision-making. We see how this decision is reached on the basis of many opinions, how it is freed from subjectivity, how it is honed and refined until it becomes the truth.

The decision is to begin artillery preparations several hours before the beginning of the German 'Citadel' operation.

The German command did not expect this. The entire operation is endangered, for it depends on the element of surprise. But the military operation is already keyed up to go into action, and it cannot be halted.

And so this battle, which the German generals believed would decide the outcome of the war in Germany's favour, is undertaken with deep foreboding.

In these scenes the film-makers succeeded in conveying to us the feeling of a certain fatal defect in the German strategy, a fault in the nazi military thinking. Judging from their memoirs, many of them still think today that what happened was accidental. If the Russians had not captured this soldier who informed them about the time operation 'Citadel' was to begin, everything would have turned out differently.

The film also shows how much in wartime depends on each regiment, battalion, unit, and each individual soldier.

During the course of the action, the destinies of various ordinary individuals participating in the battle are shown to us. The middle-aged regimental commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Lukin with his somehow non-military appearance, Zoya, the nurse, Lieutenant Vassilyev, the tank-driver, and others.

We also see the high military command—Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Vassilevsky, Vatutin, and Grechko.

For the three days before July 9 the Germans tried to drive a wedge into the Soviet defences. They succeeded, but to only a small extent. Zhukov, the representative from General Headquarters, senses that the nazi army is not capable of a sustained effort. The Soviet forces prepare for a counter-offensive, but the enemy seemingly does not evaluate the situation realistically—nearly three thousand tanks are already grouped near Kursk and they continue to draw their forces together. The strategic initiative lies in Soviet hands. Operation 'Kutuzov' begins: to strike at the German forces' flank and capture Oryol.

As the tanks begin to move at dawn, the morning mist is thickened by the smoke of gun-fire. The battle-field is filmed from a helicopter, and we see it in its entirety. A head-on battle between tanks is underway. Threads of fire mark the trajectories of the tracer shells.

A burning tank smashes into an empty battery. Another tank is overturned. A third—bearing the unlucky number '13'—catches on fire and its driver heads it into water where the tank's crew extinguish their burning clothes. In the water and on the shore fierce hand-to-hand combat is taking place, and the screen is red with blood.

The tank battle at Kursk was unique in history. Regiments were moved in from the front lines in the steppes to ensure success. Kursk indeed proved to be the turning-point—in favour of the Soviet Army.

News of this Soviet victory travelled quickly across Europe and the whole world. A new operation—'war on the rails'—was put into motion to ensure that the enemy did not escape. Partisan warfare flared up anew in all the nazi-occupied countries of Europe.

The great virtue of *Liberation* is that it showed how people from many different countries drew together in the struggle against fascism. Those years will always remain landmarks in the complex situations that make up human history.

The second part of *Liberation*, *The Break-Through*, depicts the dramatic events that determined the movement of world history, the centre of which was located on the Soviet-German front and which were unfolding in various countries. Anglo-American troops were landing in Sicily. But this was not what everyone expected it to be—the opening of a second front. True, the Italian army was demoralised and Mussolini had been taken prisoner by the partisans. Yet the Allies' successes went no farther than that. Mussolini was soon spirited away by the famous nazi agent, Otto Skorzeni, and the Anglo-American advance was firmly halted.

All of the Soviet Army's most complex military tasks had



to be carried through, as before, without the Allies' assistance.

From October 21-23, 1943, Soviet troops advanced to the Dnieper River. The nazis had built a virtually impregnable—in the opinion of military specialists—Eastern Rampart on the river's shores. The forcing of the Dnieper was shown in the film on the same scale as the real operation, with all its intense drama. Many Soviet soldiers went to their graves in the river's cold autumnal waters.

The fate of a small group of Soviet soldiers who were ordered to hang on till the last was related with great emotional power. The tragedy of their position was heightened by their knowledge that reinforcements would not arrive, for the attack was to be carried out in another direction, and their task was simply to mislead the enemy. They fight for a long time. Then silence falls, broken only by a bird's chirping. Two of the soldiers remain, searching and calling out for a third, a certain Sklyar. A shot rings out in the deceptive silence, and then only one soldier remains.

The beach-head widens, the Eastern Rampart is broken, and Kiev's golden cupolas are seen rising above the opposite shore. Kiev was liberated on November 6, in time for the anniversary of the Revolution, according to the plan drawn up by General Headquarters. Soviet troops now firmly held the strategic initiative in their hands. It was a triumph of the people's will, historical truth, and the perspicacity of the Soviet Supreme Command. At the Teheran conference attended by Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt, the Allies now have to speak seriously of a second front.

The third part of this epic, *The Main Thrust*, was released on the eve of the opening of the Twenty-Fourth CPSU Congress.

The Soviet summer offensive of 1944 was not unexpected for the nazi High Command.

This film tells how the strategic operation 'Bagration' (so named in honour of the hero of the Battle of Borodino) was prepared and put into action. The thrust was directed

through the woods and marshlands of Byelorussia. German generals later wrote in their memoirs that the Russians acted in defiance of all logic.

The film concentrates on showing the struggle between two different forms of military logic, strategy, and tactics.

This operation was discussed for a long time and all the 'pros' and 'cons' carefully weighed up. The flexibility and depth of the General Headquarters' collective thought is obvious; not only is logic taken into consideration, but also something much higher, a sort of special intuition. This is so different from the style of thinking favoured by the enemy High Command. Of course, their level of military thought is also very high, for Germany is noted for its strong, deeply-rooted military traditions. The military operation is worked out in all its breadth, like a philosophical system, everything is provided for as in a code of laws, all the variations and twists of fate that could possibly happen are foreseen. But then, as it turns out, certain circumstances were left out of consideration. The battle is lost at the level of the two General Headquarters. It is Soviet military strategy that triumphs.

Operation 'Bagration' begins on the night of June 23, 1944. The tanks roll across the marshlands on corduroy roads. The infantry use whatever falls to hand to help them get across the treacherous swamp. Two days earlier partisans carry out their part in the operation—blowing up bridges and destroying roads. The operation is carried out exactly according to plan; the most important thing is that everyone—from Marshal down to officers and ordinary privates—is united in one great aggressive push. The film recreates this atmosphere in all of its audio-visual detail. The events depicted are scrupulously reconstructed. The historical figures shown in the film—and there are more than fifty of them—have their every word and gesture confirmed by memoirs and front-line communiqués.

There are a fair number of films that treat historical events and figures in much too free, familiar a manner, passing off

their superficial interpretations as artistic treatment of the material. The makers of *Liberation* rejected arbitrary methods of this type. Millions of viewers in the Soviet Union and abroad want to see the truth about the most dramatic, decisive, heroic years of the twentieth century.

During operation 'Bagration' the nazi army 'Center' grouping was destroyed and one of the largest battles of the Second World War was won.

The two Soviet front-lines joined at Minsk. Byelorussia and part of the Lithuania were liberated. The Soviet troops advanced to the border and the liberation of Europe began.

The successes won by the Soviet troops made the opening of a second front easier. The film shows the Allied landing at Normandy, which was a precise, well-coordinated operation. But if we compare it to what is depicted in *The Longest Day*, the resistance of the nazi troops is not so cinematically fierce. This is, too, in accordance with historical truth.

The film also depicts 'the July 20th conspiracy', the unsuccessful attempt on Hitler's life in his 'Wolfschanze' retreat.

Some scenes and episodes are brief, but unforgettable in the vivid, expressive details chosen by the film-makers. The entire film is constructed around laconic details: otherwise it would have been impossible to include such a colossal mass of material. A bridge is built across the Bug River; Poland lies on the other side. Soviet units make way for Polish soldiers wearing four-cornered caps, for they should be the first to step onto their native soil.

Finally, the last part of this grandiose epic, *The Battle for Berlin*. War had finally arrived on German soil. No one in any part of the world had any doubt about its outcome any more. The spring of 1945 was real and ordinary, yet symbolic and unforgettable, filled with the joy of Victory that was now so close. The film was able to convey the atmosphere of this spring.

But nonetheless, the war was not yet over, victory would not come of itself, and Hitler had promised, as he departed

from history and life, to slam the door so hard that the whole world would shake. This was not just a madman's attempt to console himself in his final defeat. Work on creating a 'new weapon', which Goebbels' propaganda machine had been announcing from the very beginning of the war, was going ahead at a furious tempo.

At this final stage of the war, decisive, strategically and tactically perfect, blows had to be struck, so that the end would come quickly. Nazi troops were retreating on all fronts, but not at all 'in disorder'. The war was dramatic until its very last hours. The realisation that they were defeated drove the nazis to a desperate, fanatical resolution to fight to the last drop of blood.

These and a number of other factors complicated aggressive operations in March and April, and in early May, 1945. A counter-blow by nazi forces was foreseen in time. We saw many organic defects in nazi military science during the film's four parts—this science had many good points, but it was also very vulnerable. This was especially noticeable in the last stage of the war.

The Polish Army entered Warsaw. The fraternity between Soviet and Polish soldiers that had grown up in their common struggle is conveyed by means of many laconic details and restrained touches in people's behaviour.

The war approaches Berlin itself, the last storming draws near, the defeat of the nazis in their own lair is at hand. By the light of enormous projectors that blind the enemy, Soviet troops surge forward to break through the German defences. The Spree River is forced. Fighting takes place in the streets of Berlin. According to participants, these scenes in the film are so accurate that they could be taken for documental footage. The fierce, tense fighting within the Reichstag itself is forcefully shown. The audience sees clearly the emotions that dominate each side in this final battle.

We see the dramatic, yet somehow farcical events in Hitler's residence, and we understand that they are deeply symbolic,

that this is the only logical end to fascist ideology with its profound hatred of humanity.

In the last hours of the war, on Hitler's orders the locks of the Spree are opened, and thousands of German women, children, and wounded who had sought refuge in the Berlin underground are drowned. An overwhelming impression is given by an episode that, like all of *Liberation*, is founded on real facts: Soviet soldiers try to save the Berliners in the underground, hold back the horrified crowds, and German soldiers come to the aid of the Soviet soldiers in this humane act.

There are moments in history when some real event acquires deep symbolic significance and illuminates the future.

*Liberation* ends with the laconic note; during the war several hundred thousand Americans, Frenchmen, and Englishmen died. And twenty million Soviet men and women. This enormous, sorrowful figure says a great deal—that it was the Soviet Union that took on itself the brunt of the struggle to liberate mankind from fascist captivity, and that to consolidate the might of our country is the sacred bequest of those who fell in battle.

We have as yet very few films about the final stage of the war, when fighting was no longer on Soviet soil, when victory was already felt to be at hand. This period was a very special one, and the film-makers of *Spring on the Oder* conveyed its atmosphere very well.

It was April, 1945. An overcast, colourless spring in Germany. Unusual landscapes: cement-fortified river banks, dams, grey buildings whose purpose is unclear. Shop signs and walls bear words that are incomprehensible, even though nearly everyone has studied German at school and understands a bit of it.

Soviet troops forced the Oder, the last waterway on the path to Berlin. Ponton bridges were thrown across the river solidly and skilfully. The crossing proceeds smoothly and confidently.

Director L. Saakov, who had been a cameraman at the

## First Steps



Sergei Eisenstein

Eduard Tisse

*Battleship 'Potemkin'*

Dziga Vertov



Yakov Protazanov

*Red Devils*











Vsevolod Pudovkin

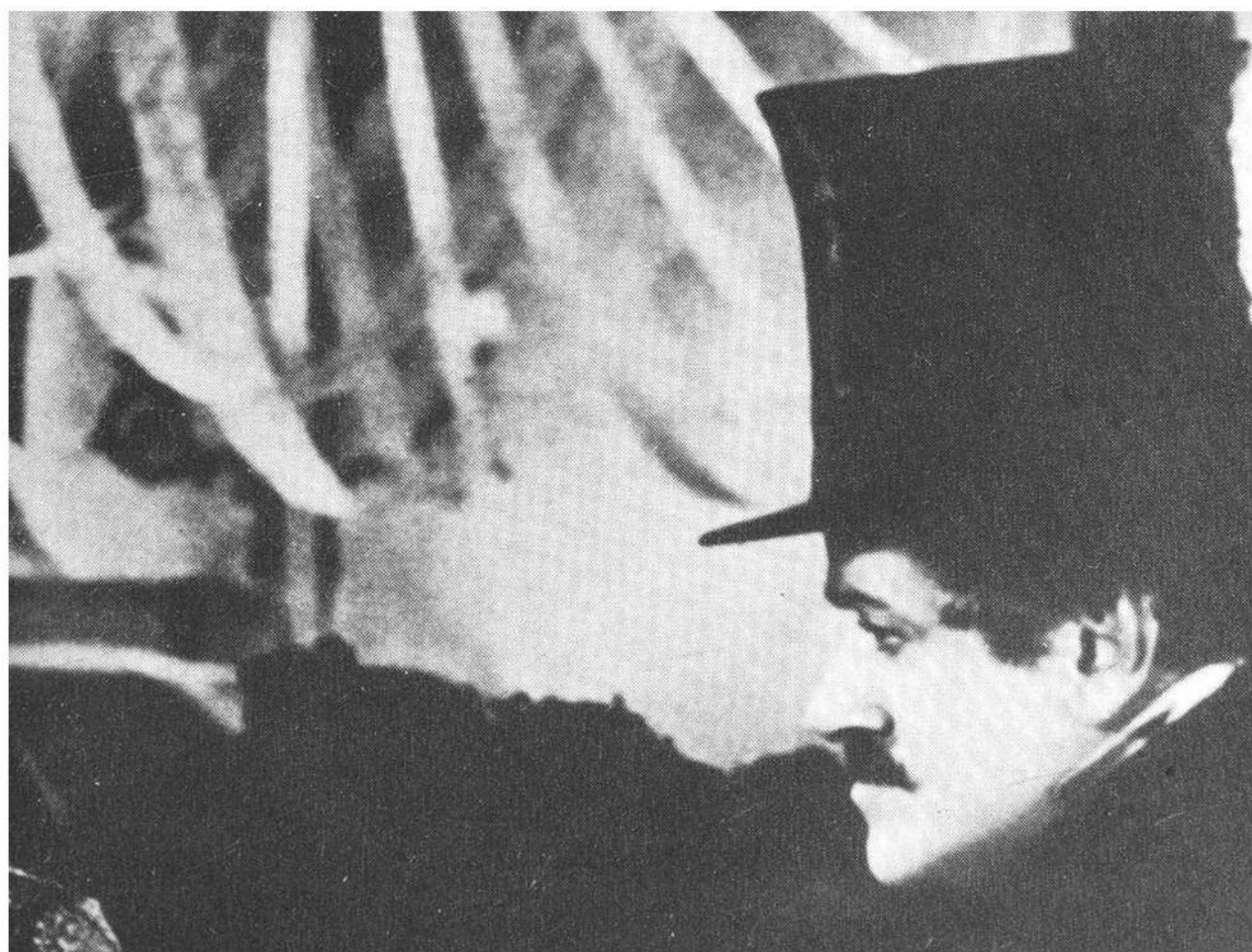


Amo Bek-Nazarov

Lev Kuleshov



*The New Babylon*





Georgy Vassilyev



Sergei Vassilyev





# Socialist Realism in the Cinema



*Chapaev*



*We Are from Kronstadt*

*The Baltic Deputy*

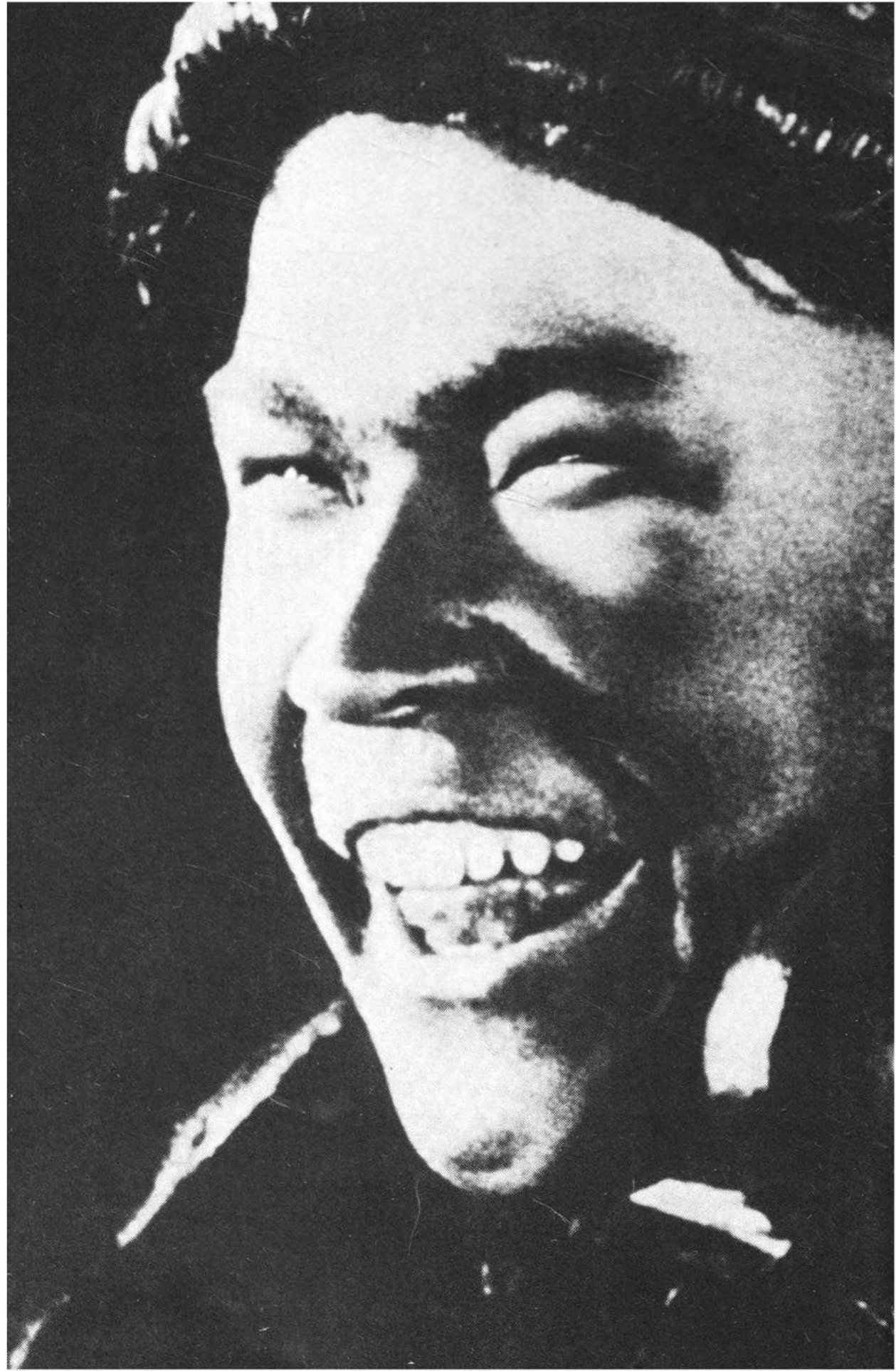
*The Vyborg Side*

*Shchors*

Grigori Kozintsev













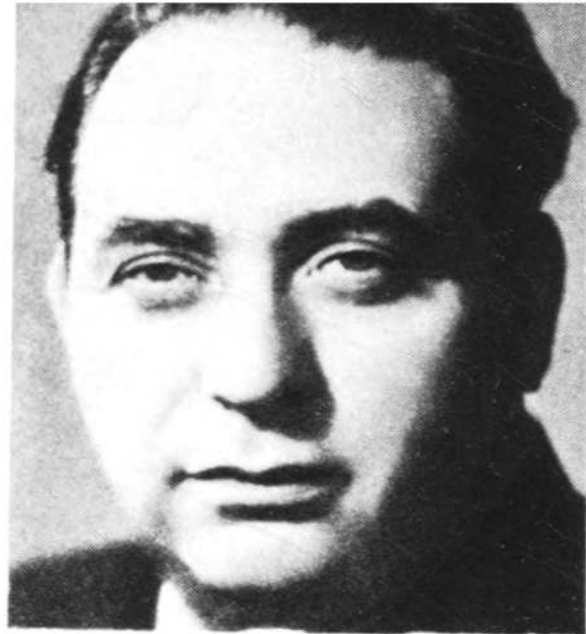
*olly Fellows*

Grigori Aleksandrov



*oad to Life*





Leonid Lukov

Alexandr Dovzhenko

*Great Life*







Igor Savchenko

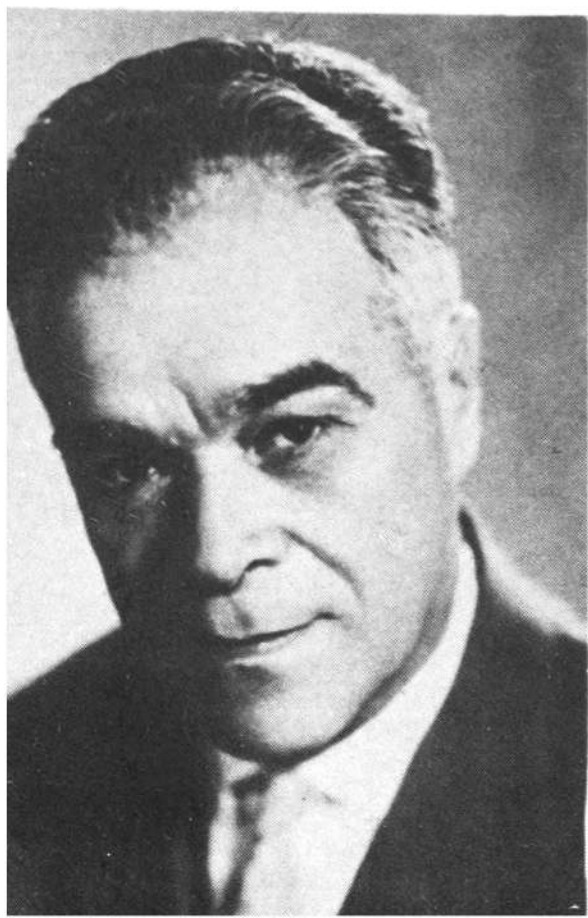
Mikhail Romm

*A Great Citizen*

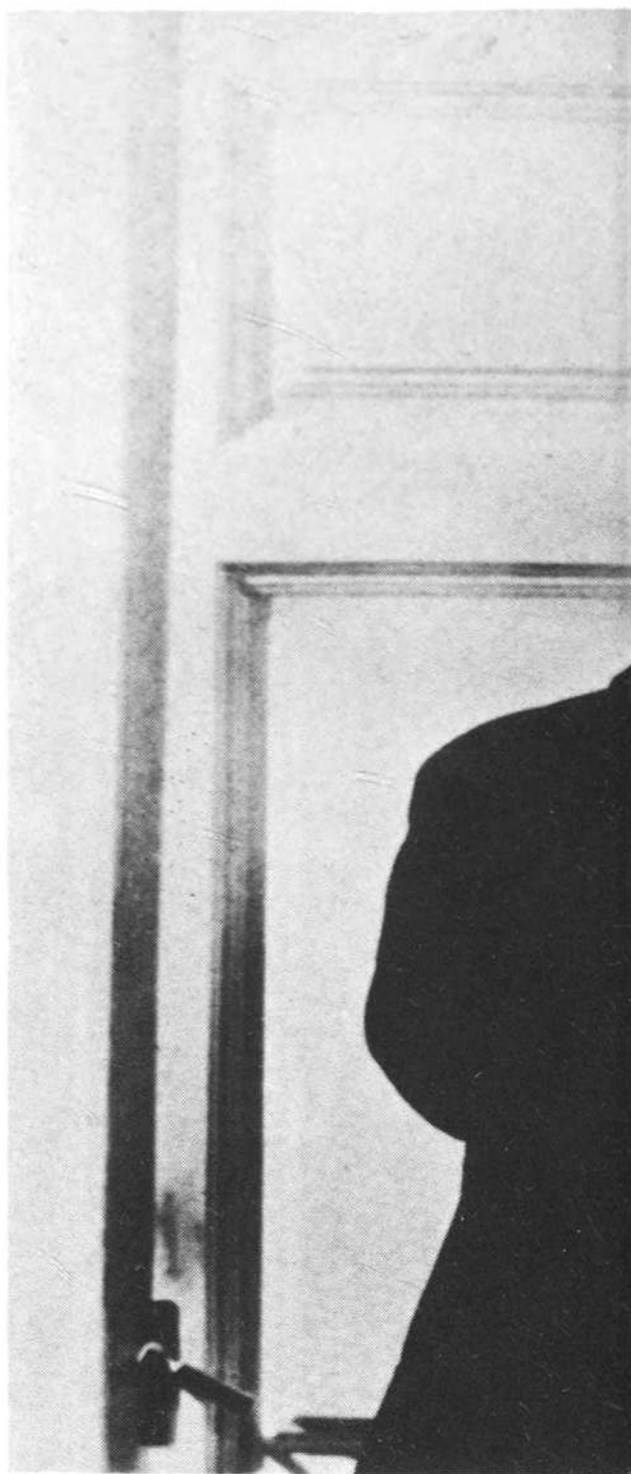
*The Bold Seven*



Sergei Yutkevich



Mark Donskoy



## Films About Lenin



*Lenin in October*





*Man With a Gun*

*Lenin in October*



*Lenin in Poland*

*Stories About Lenin*



*Aleksandr Nevsky*



# The People's Memory

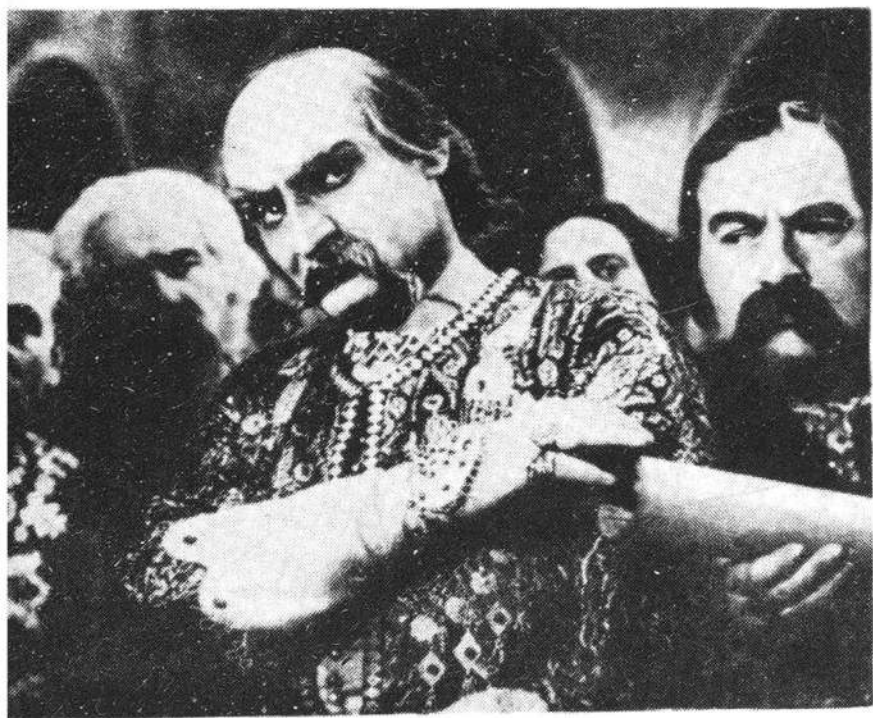






*Admiral Nakhimov*

*Peter the Great*



*Georgy Saakadze*

*Suvorov*





*Minin and Pozharsky*



*Bogdan Khmelnitsky*





*Liberation*



## The Second World War on the Screen

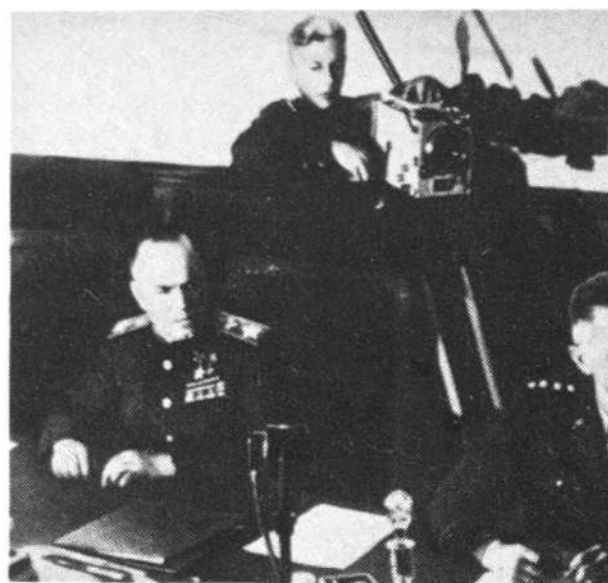






*Normandy-Neman*

*Two Soldiers*

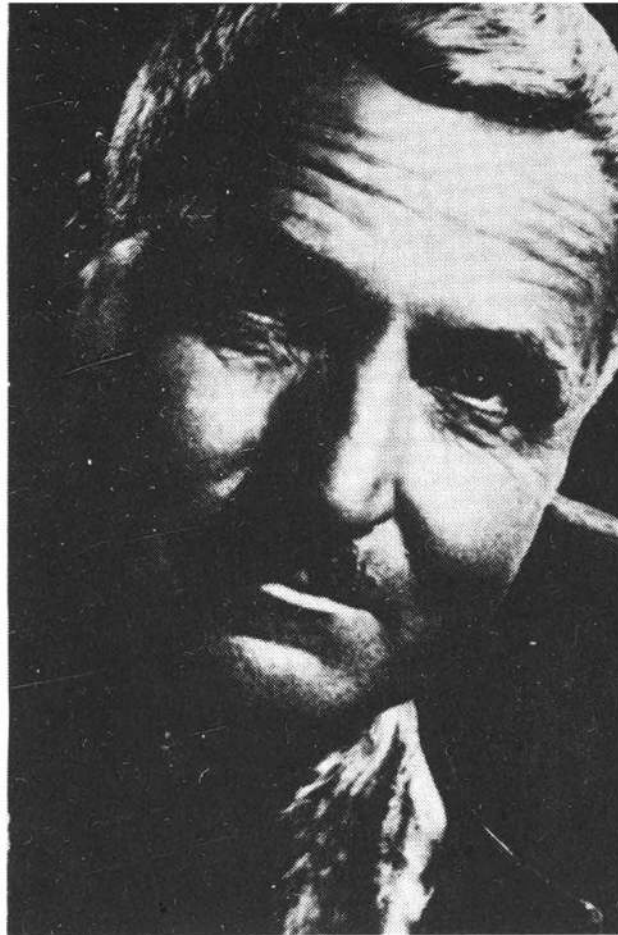
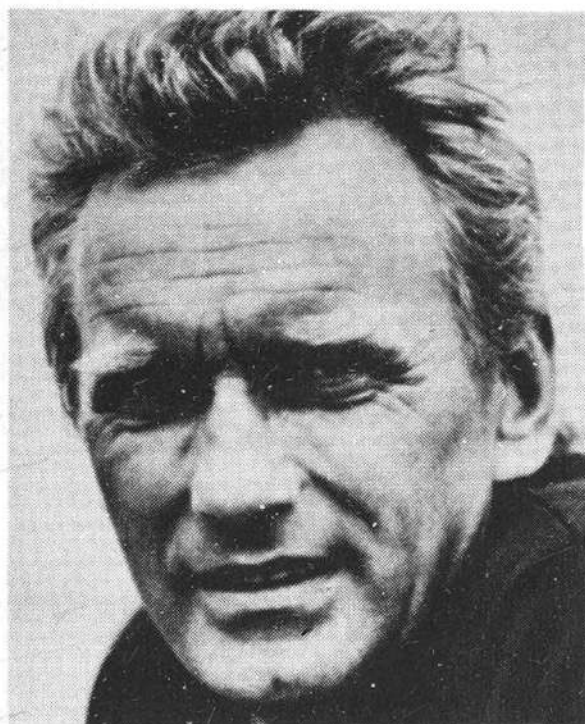


*The Great Patriotic War*

*She Defends Her Homeland*

Gunar Tsilinsky

Konstantin Simonov



*An Intelligence Officer's Feat*



*Maryte*

*The Living and the Dead*

*A Story About a Real Man*  
*Dawns Are Quiet Here...*

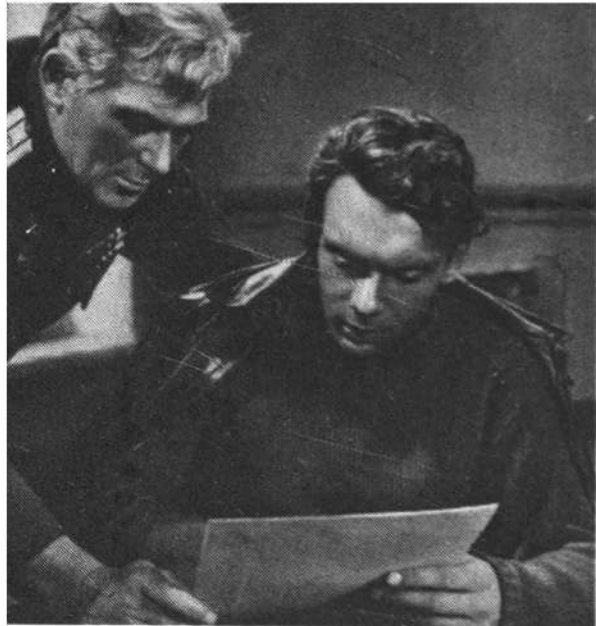
*The Great Patriotic War*

*The Fate of a Man*

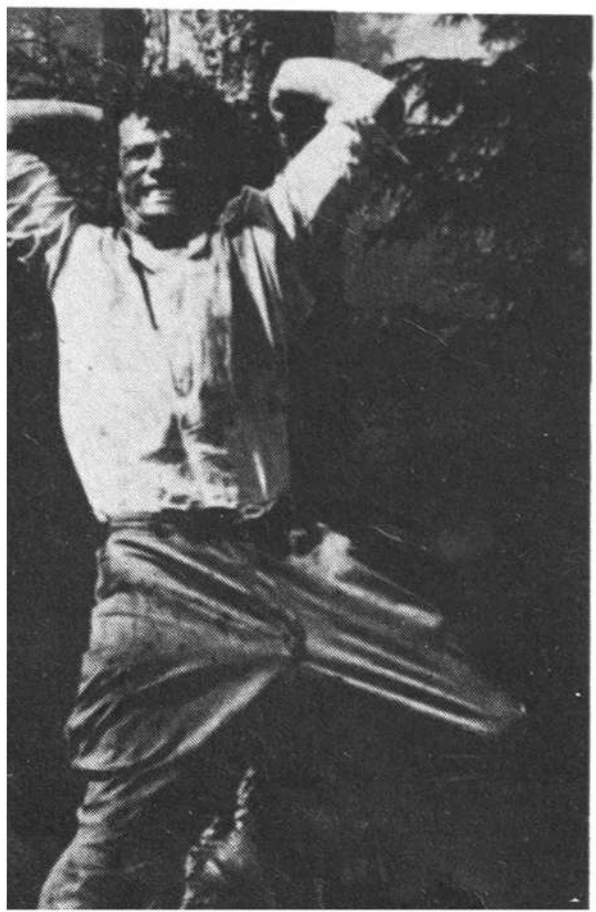








*Rumyantsev's Case*



*The Communist*

# Soviet Cinema in the Post-War Years

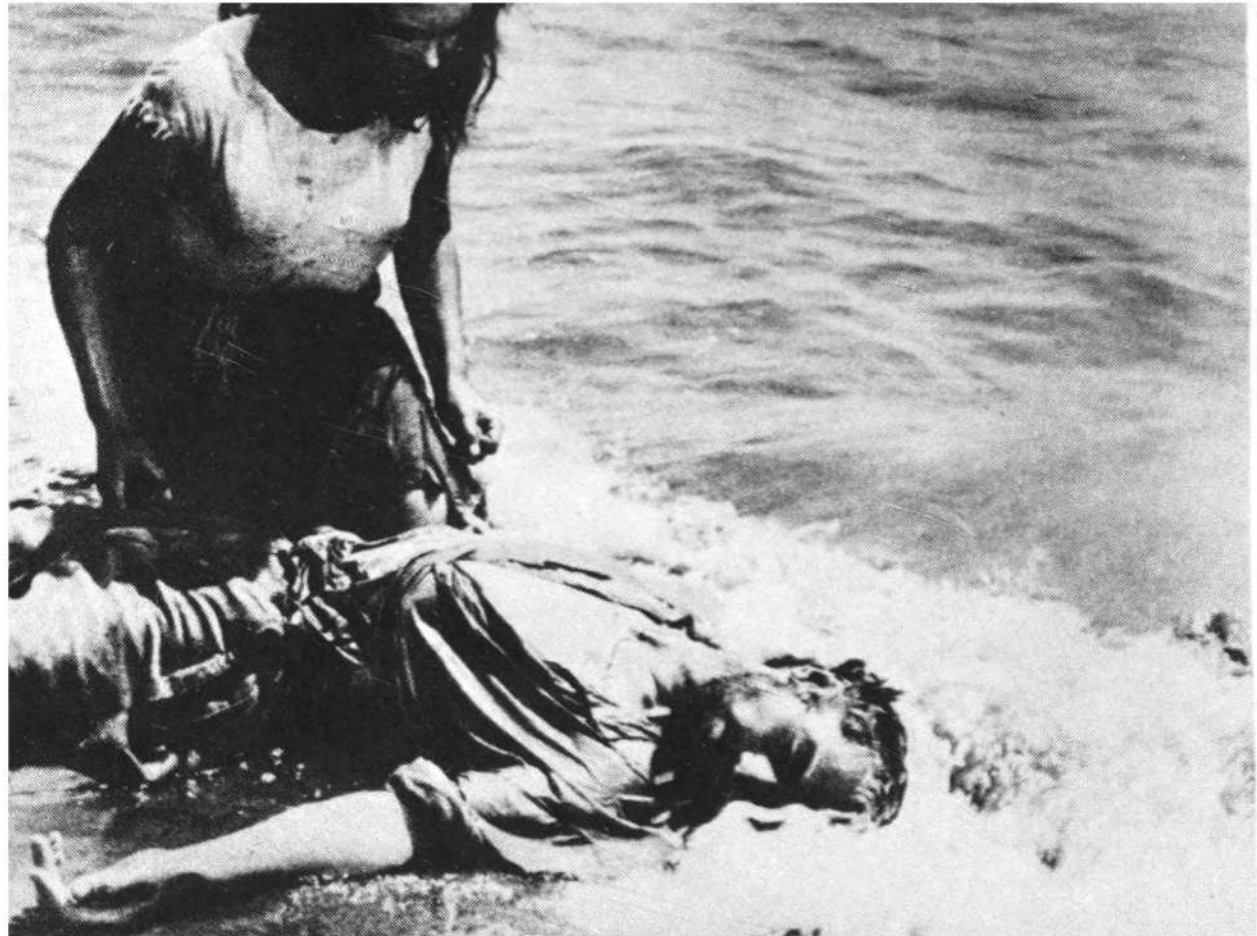


*The Cranes Are Flying*



*A Great Family*





*The Forty-First*

*Poem About the Sea*

*The Young Guard*

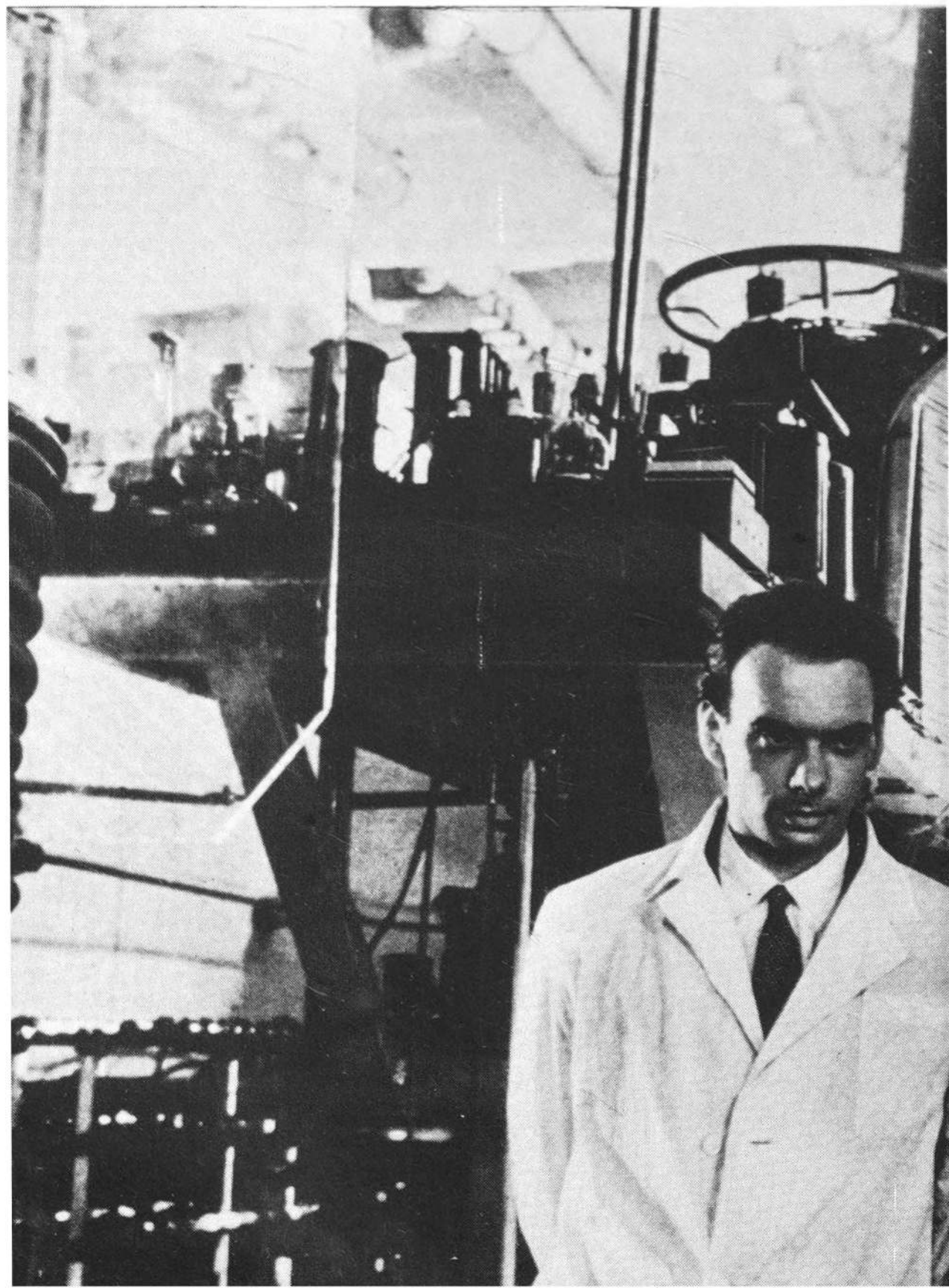
*Ballad of a Soldier*



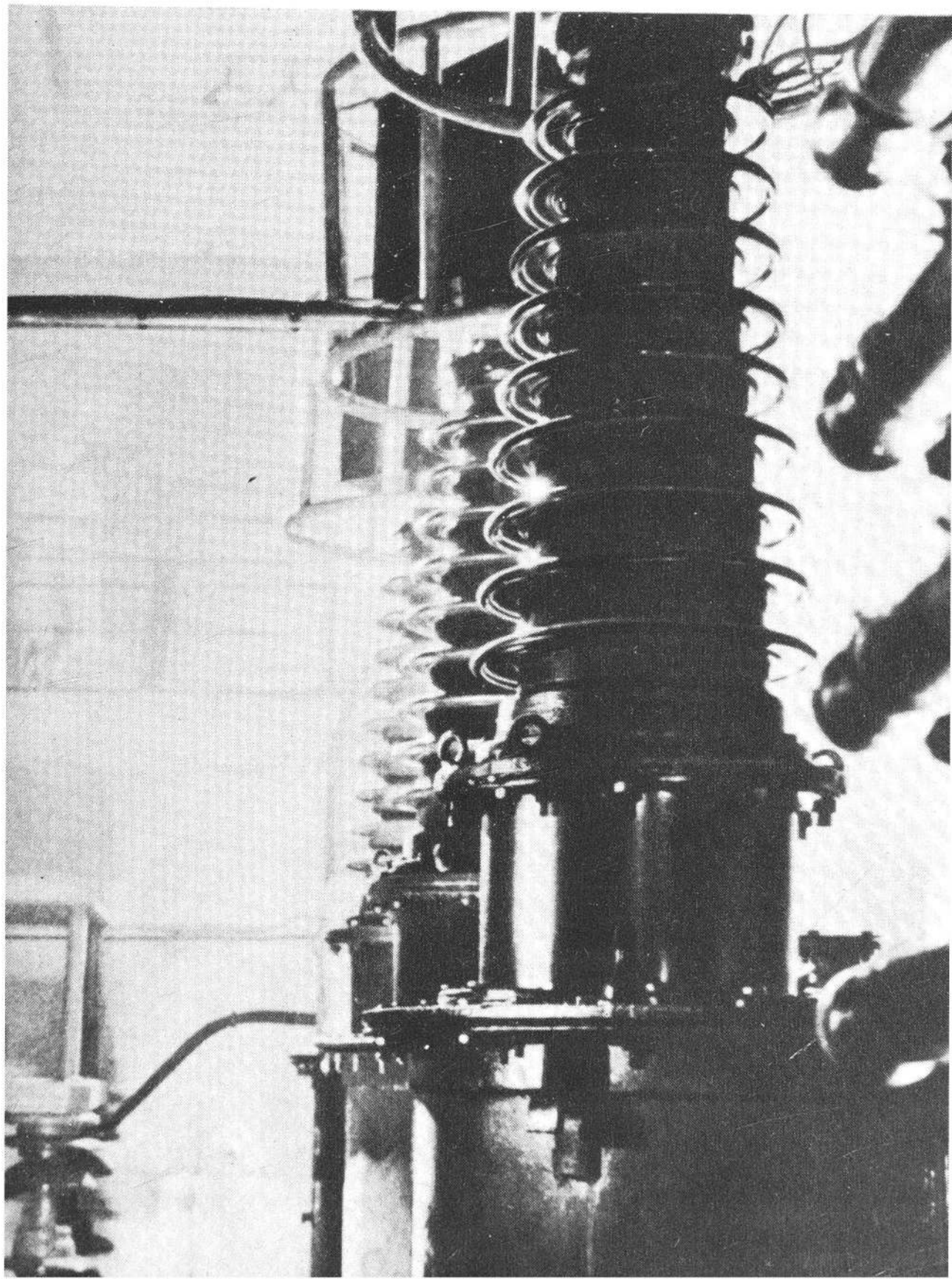




*Nine Days in One Year*



## The Current Scene



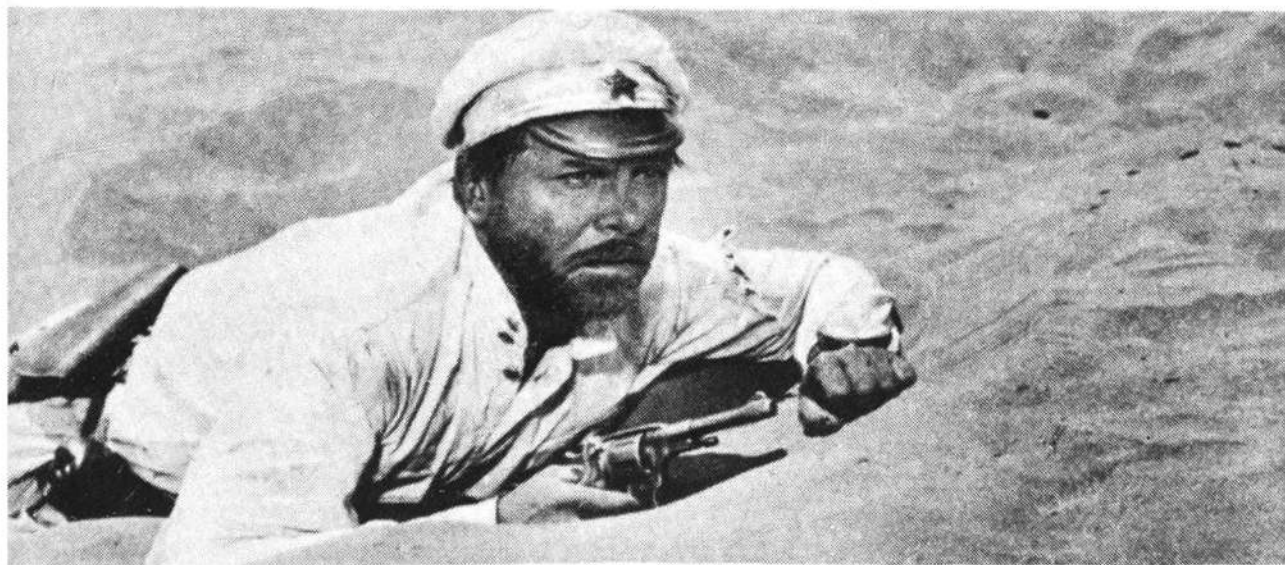
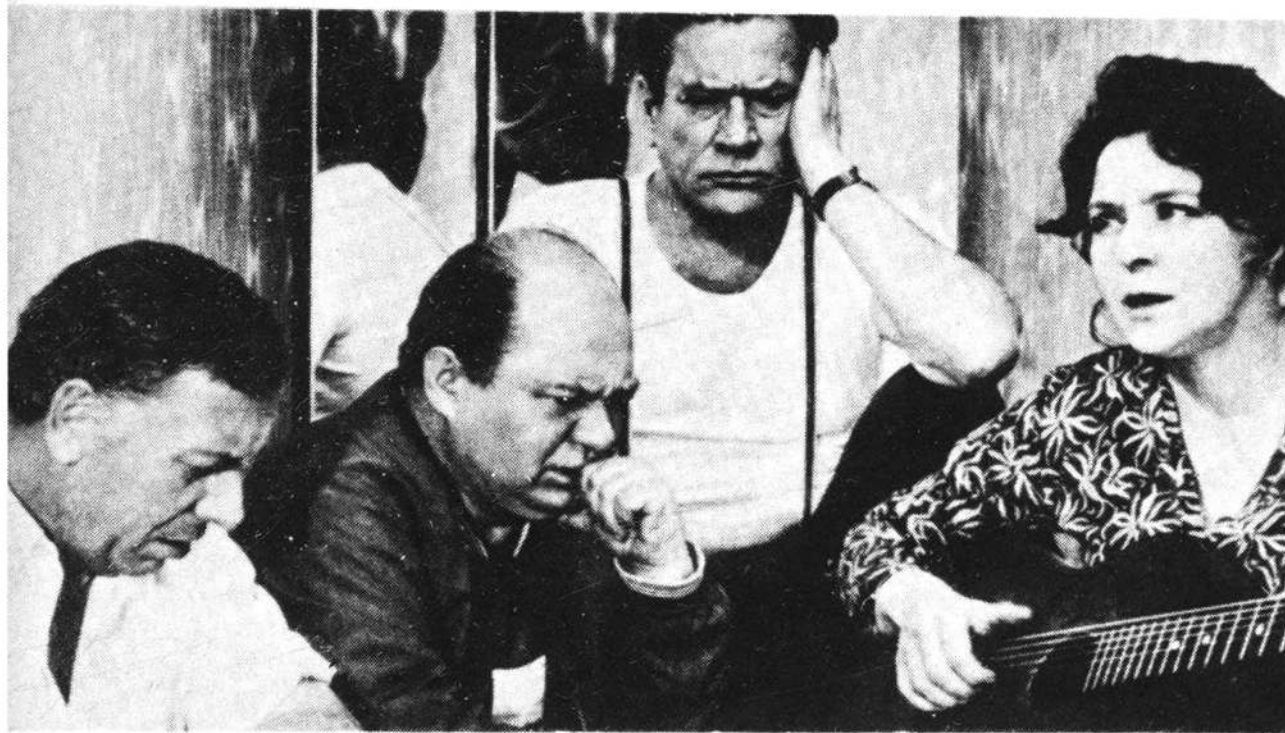


*White Bird with a Black Marking*



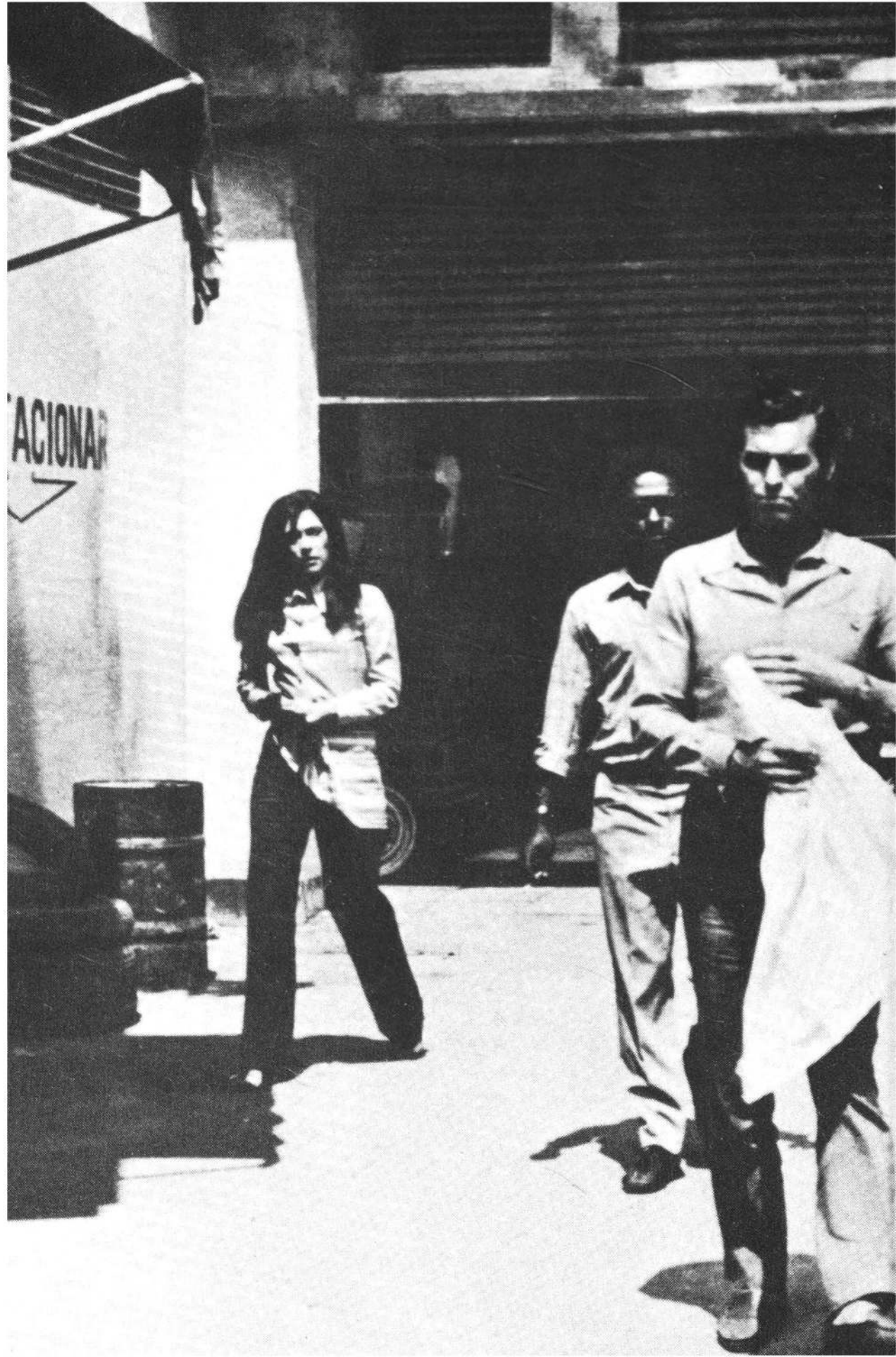


*Byelorussia Station*



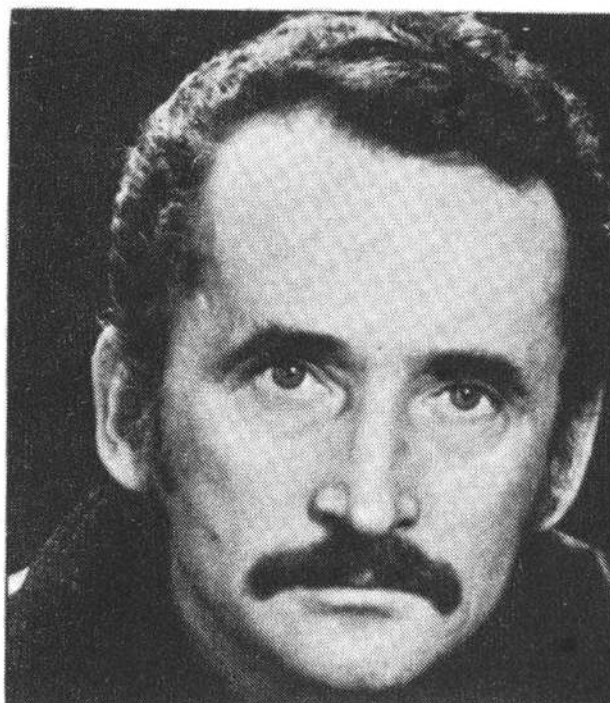
*The White Sun of the Desert*

*One Soldier, Two Soldiers... (Aty-Baty...)*



*That Sweet Word 'Freedom'*

Vytautas Zalakevičius



*The First Teacher*

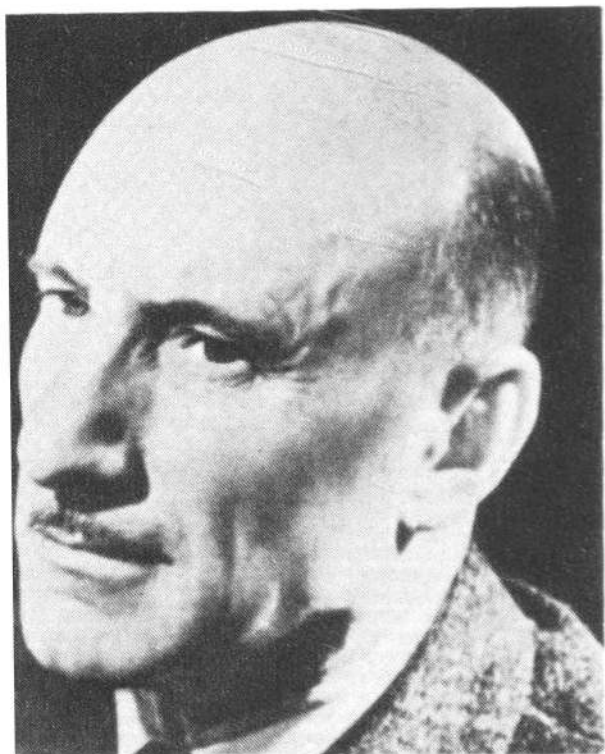








Sergei Gerasimov



*They Were the First*  
*Pavel Korchagin*

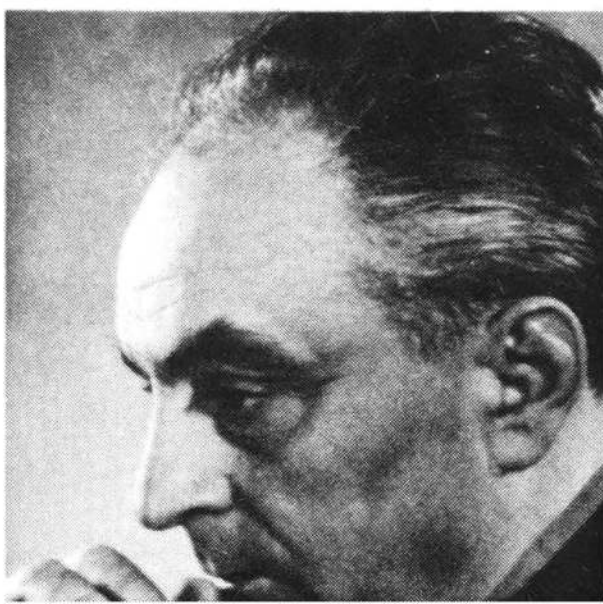


Mikhail Sholokhov

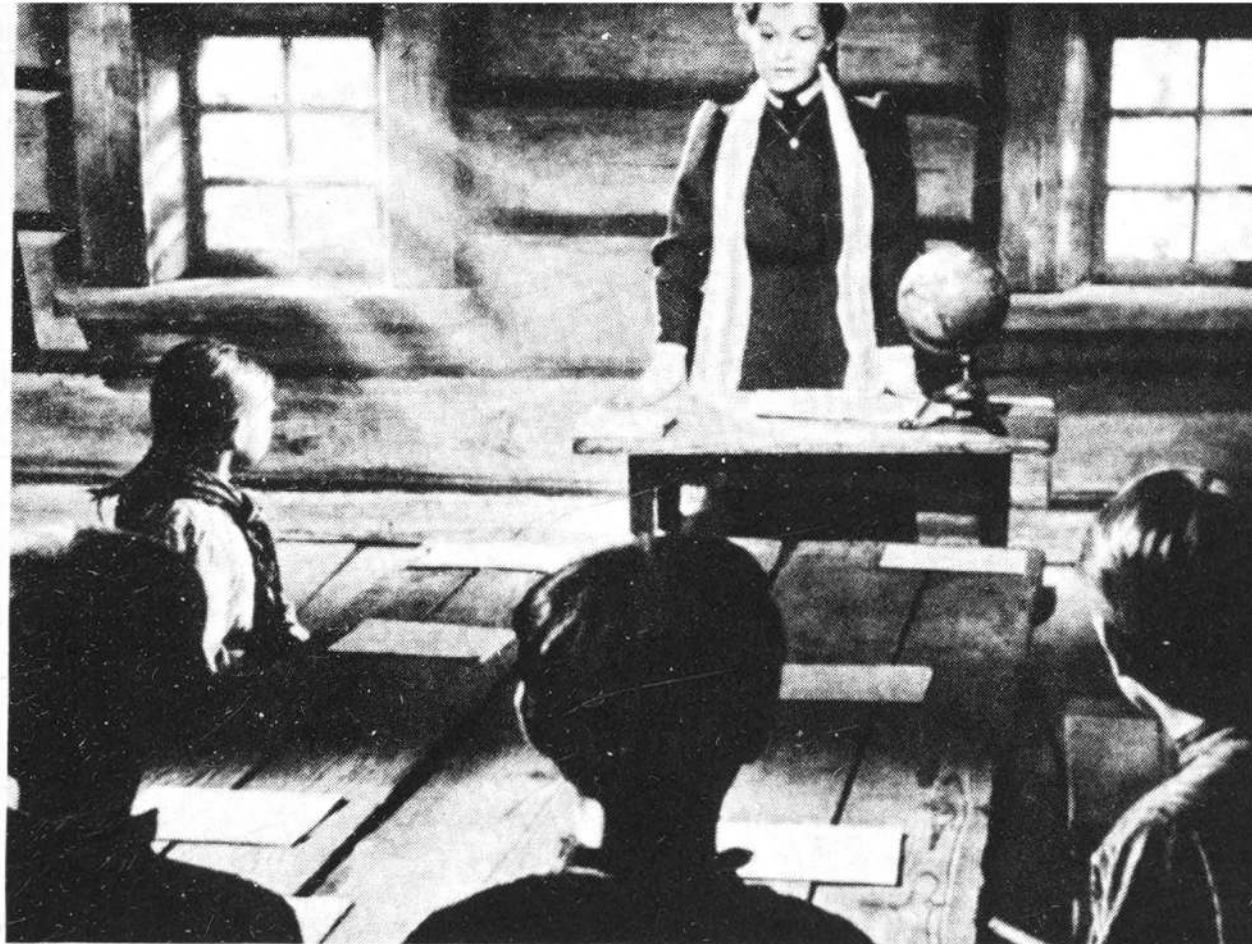


*And Quiet Flows the Don*









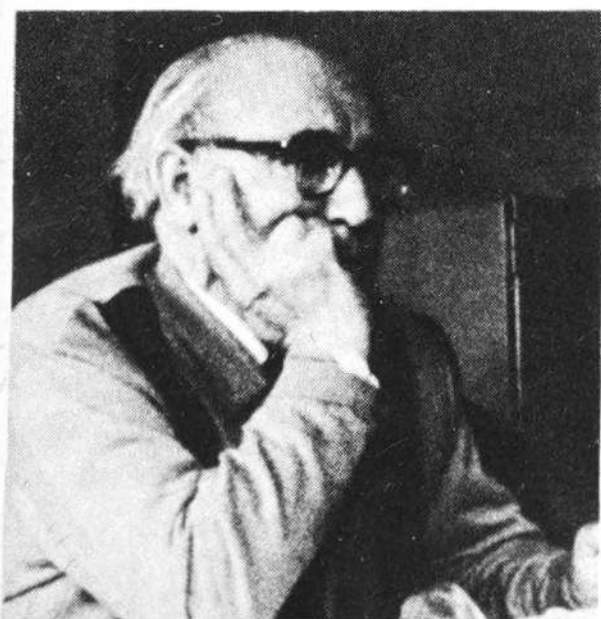
*A Village Schoolteacher*

Mikhail Kalatozov  
Evgeni Gabrilovich  
Aleksandr Rou

Friedrich Ermler  
Aleksandr Ptushko  
Iosif Heifits

Efim Dzigan

Grigori Roshal







I. Pyriev and A. Kurosawa

*Brothers Karamazov*

*Brothers Karamazov*

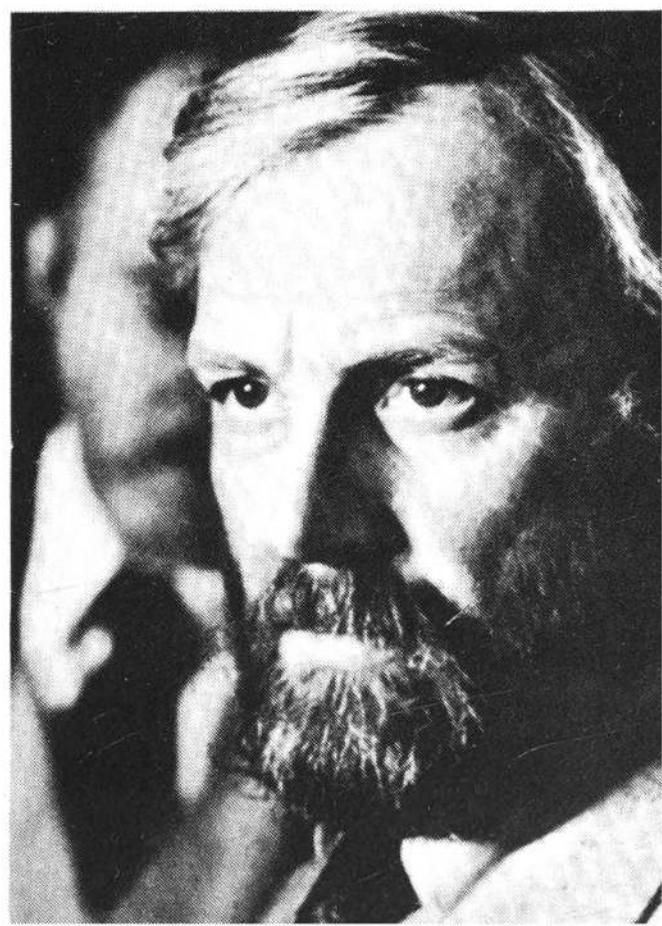






*Mimino*

*Uncle Vanya*



*The Taming of Fire*

*Time, March On!*



*The Idiot (Nastasya Filippovna)*





*Dr. Pills-and-Powders-66*







*Afonya*



*A Tale of Tsar Saltan*

*How the Steel Was Tempered*

Rezo Chkheidze

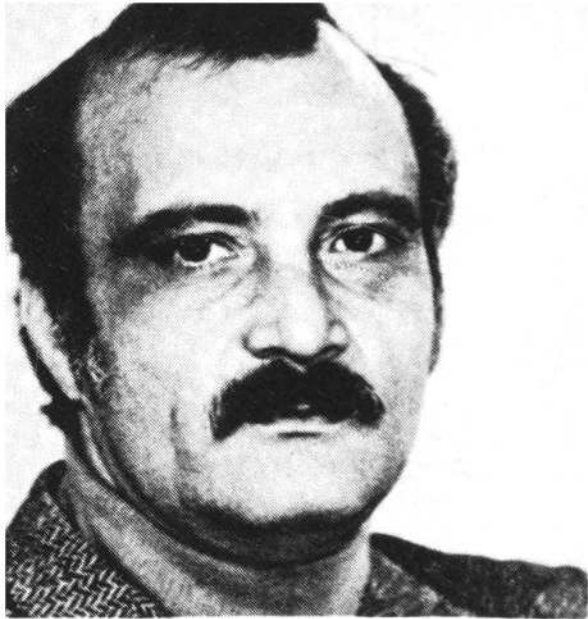


*The Black Sun*

*The Chairman*





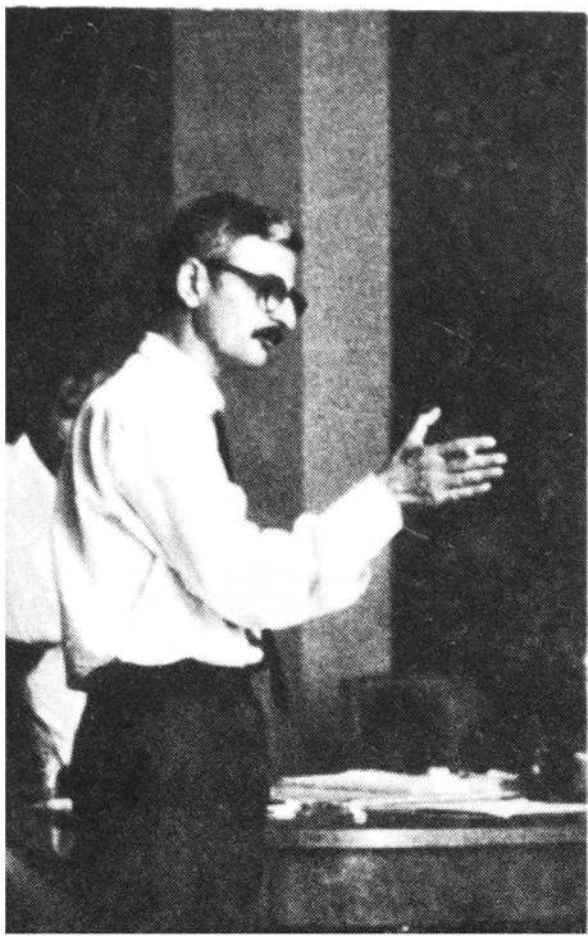


Georgy Danelia



Mikhail Schweitser

*I Am Twenty*



Marlen Khutsiev



Aleksandr Alov



Vladimir Naumov



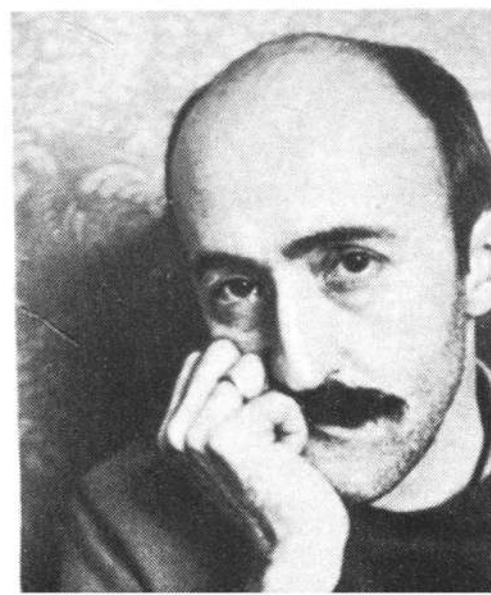
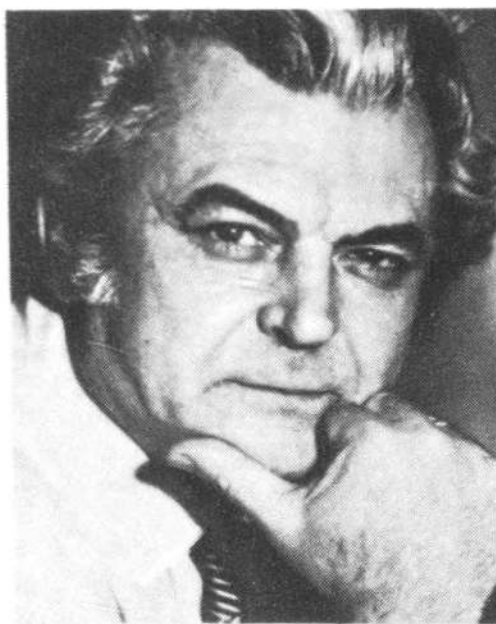




Vassily Shukshin



Nikolai Gubenko  
Sergei Bondarchuk  
Otar Ioseliani



*We'll Get By Till Monday*

*An Ordinary Story*

*What If It Is Love?*



*The Hottest Month*

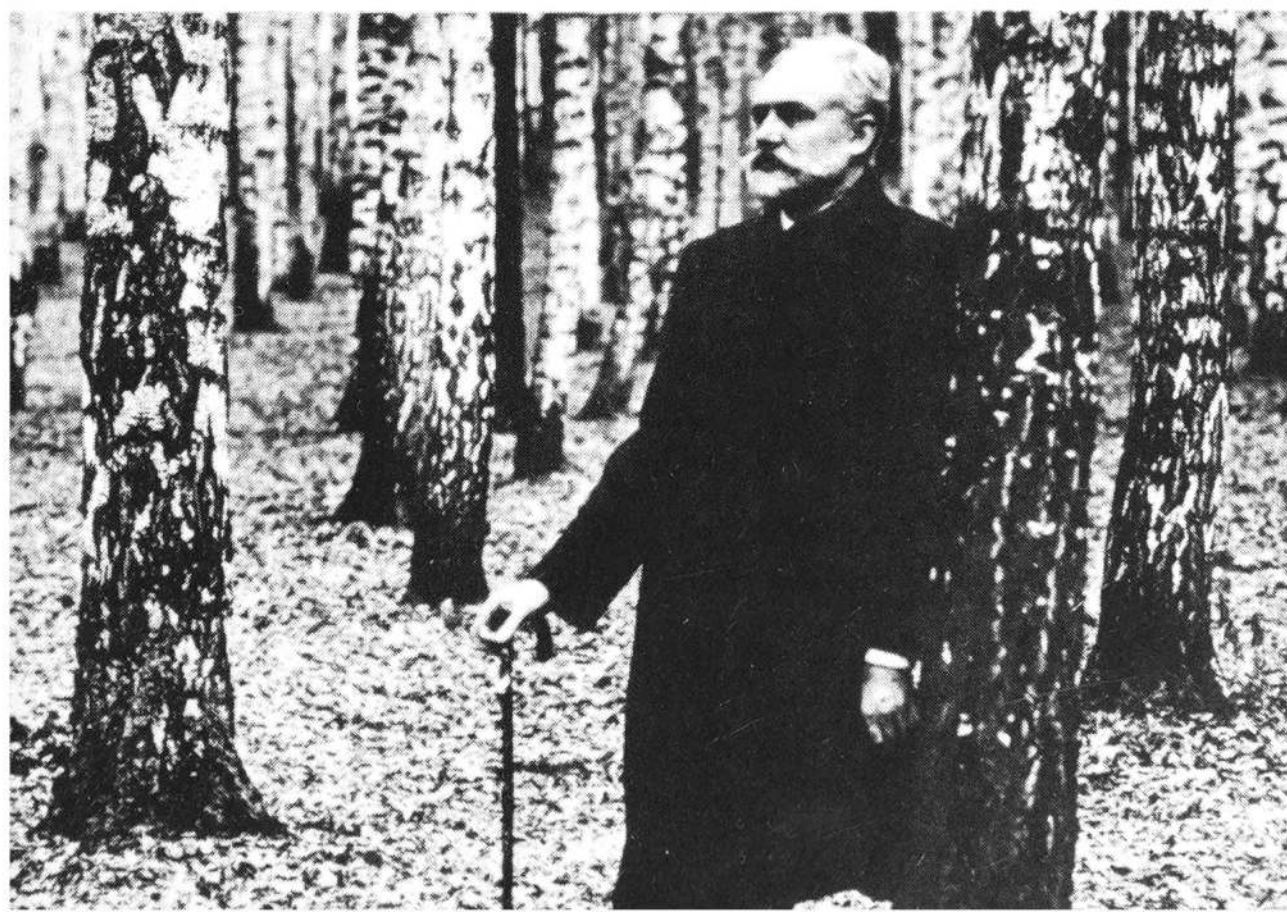
*No Ford in Fire*

*A Nest of the Gentry*

*Tchaikovsky*



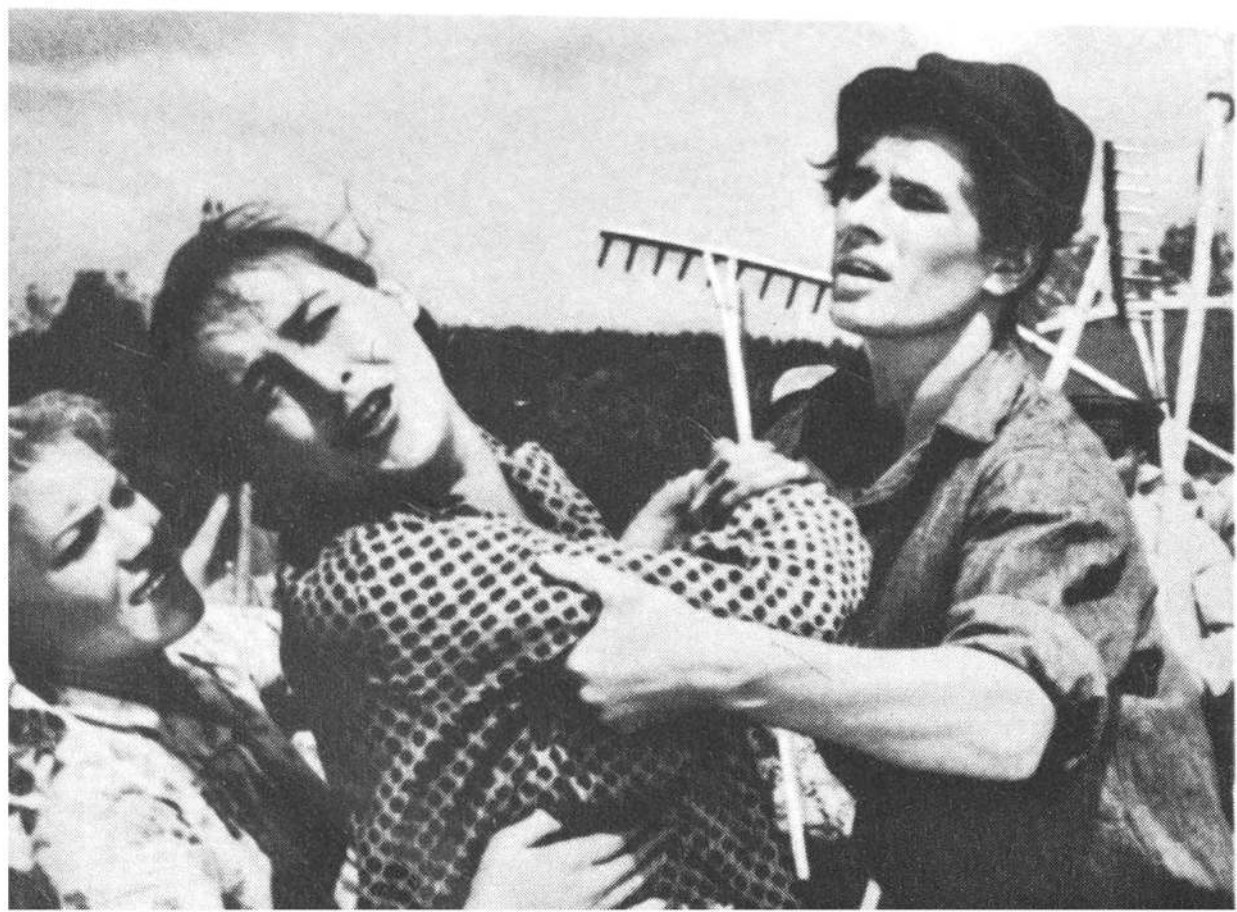




Yuly Raizman      Grigori Chukhrai



*Son-in-Law*

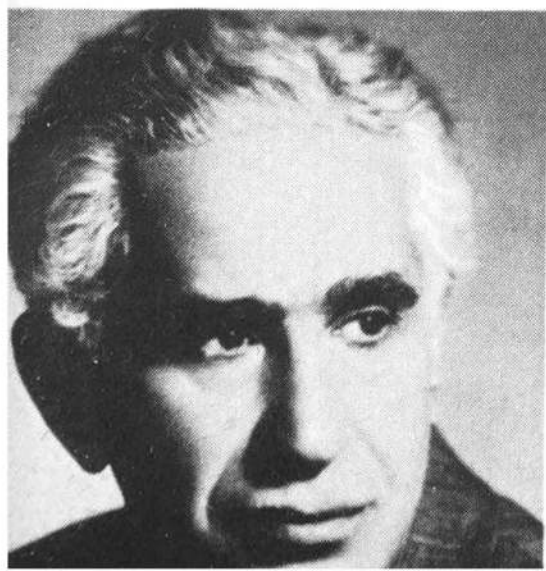




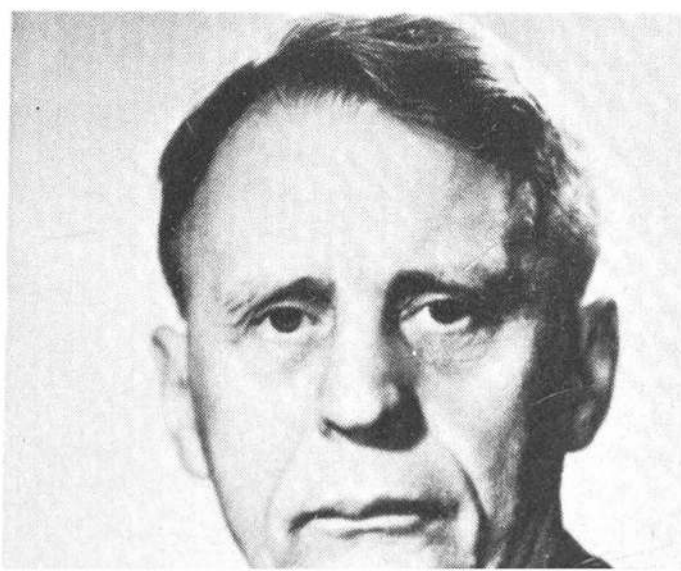


*The Heights*

Aleksandr Zarkhi



Ivan Pyriev





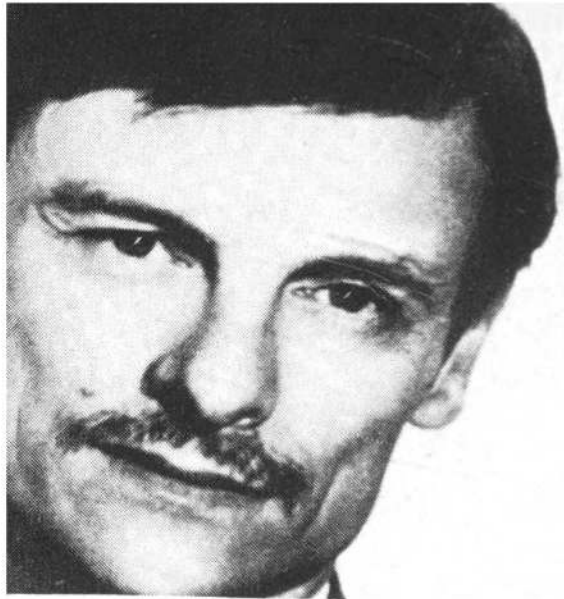
*Ordinary Fascism*

*The Beginning*

*Off-Season*







Andrei Tarkovsky





*Andrei Rublyov*





S. Rostotsky and a young actress  
from Japan

*Oh That Nastya!*

*Three Days in the Life of Victor Chernyshov*

*The Tale of the Flaming Years*



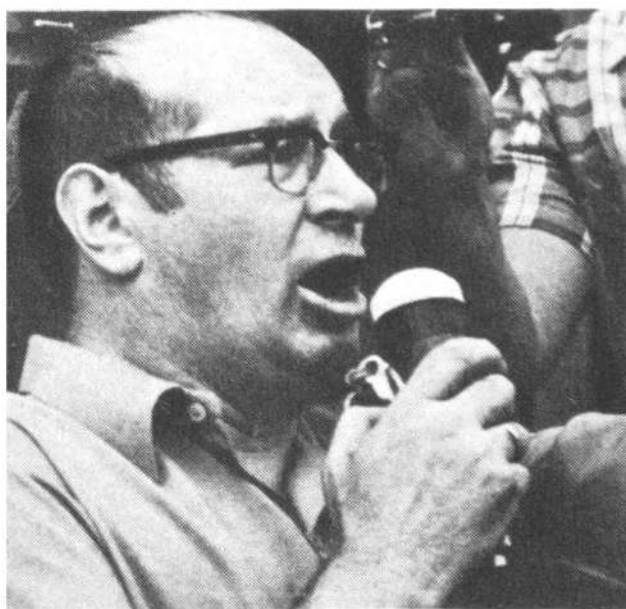


Yulia Solntseva

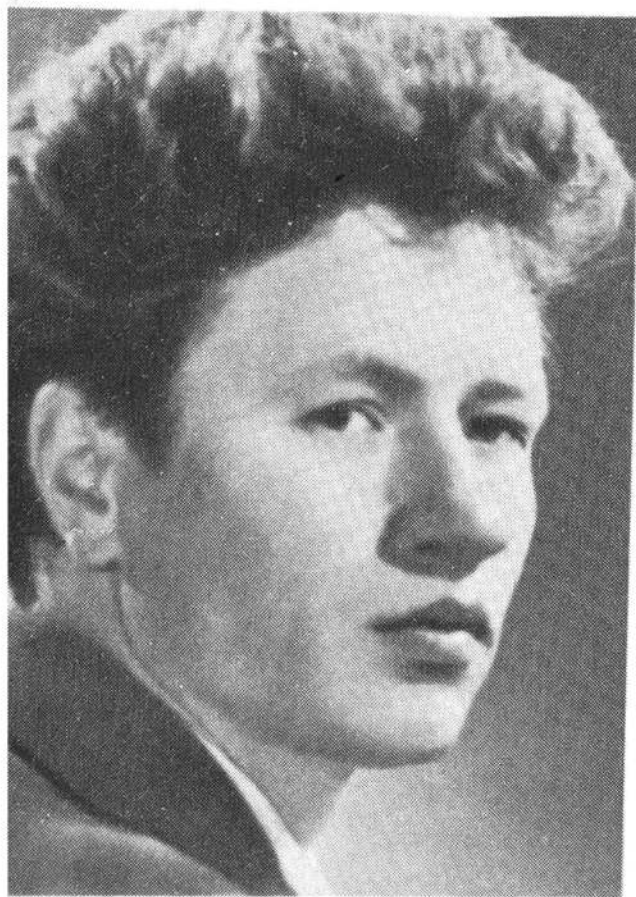
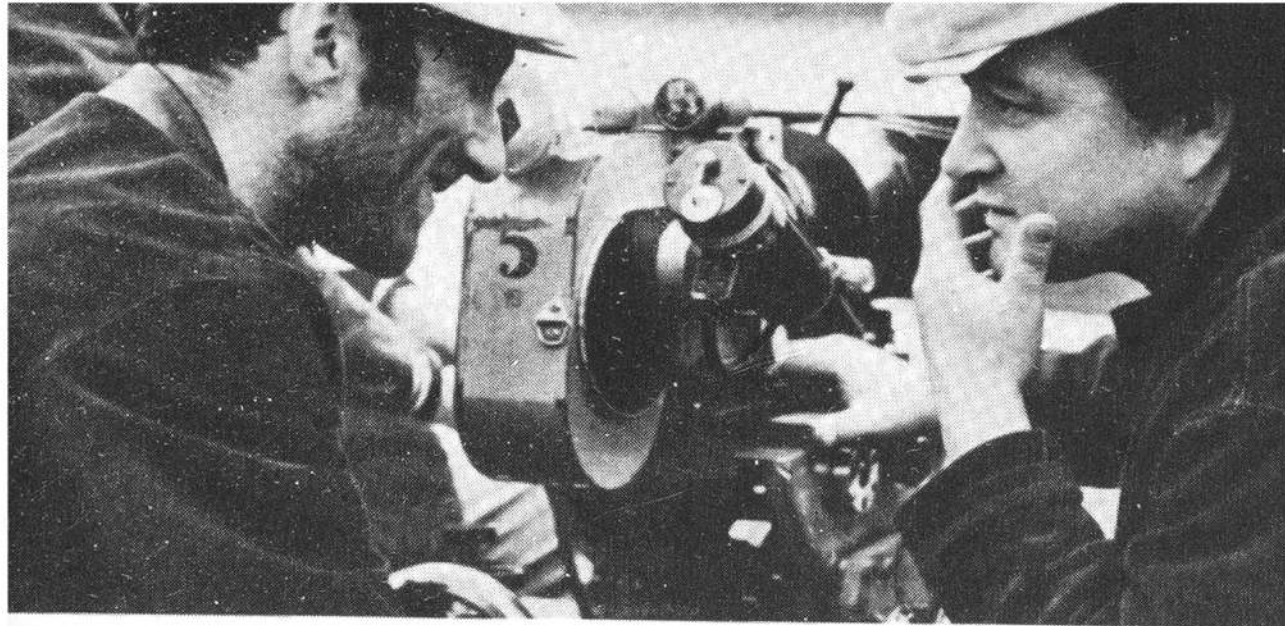
Igor Talankin

Gleb Panfilov

Lev Kulidzhanov  
and Stanley Kramer







Alexei Saltykov (right)

Leonid Bykov

Savva Kulish

Larissa Shepitko



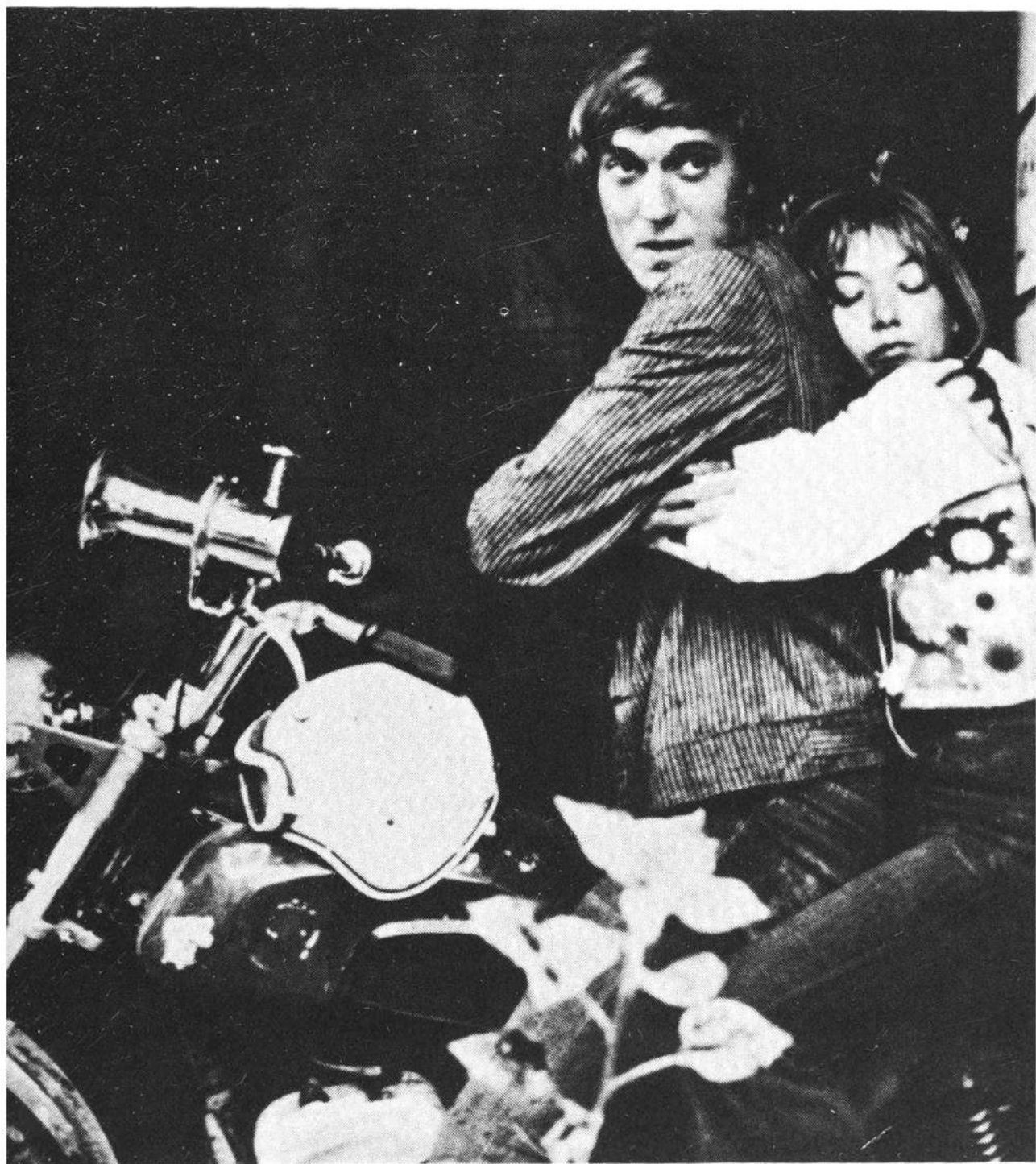
Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky



*The Red Snow-Ball Tree*



# The Soviet Audience



*A Lovers' Romance*

*Father of a Soldier*





# Soviet Films on Foreign Screens







*War and Peace*



*King Lear*  
*Hamlet*





front during the war, recreated unforgettable scenes accurately and forcefully.

The soldiers, officers, and generals who forced the Oder knew that the last days, the last hours of the war had come. It would soon end, that was certain.

A marshal who had arrived at the furthest forward position on the front lines holds a conference with those officers who will soon be military commandants of German towns. 'The nazis caused us many irreplaceable losses,' the marshal says, 'but we would be making a serious mistake if we identified them with the whole German people. As Soviet commandants we should above all take care of children...'

Captain Chokhov gets to his feet and asks to be excused from duty as a commandant. The Germans killed his entire family and he would find it very difficult to carry out his duties under the circumstances.

Emmanuil Kázakevich's story, on which this film is based, takes in a wide scope of events. Sometimes the action takes place in Hitler's general headquarters. True, although these scenes are necessary to the general conception, they are somehow weaker. The writer of the story and the director used material from secondary sources for these scenes and sometimes relied on their own interpretations.

The events in the film take us right up to the very end of the war—the fighting in Berlin and Hitler's suicide; the last fanatics are defeated as they defend the nazis' last stronghold. Again, we see Captain Chokhov, whose entire family had perished, and who has now seemingly killed the last nazi, as he stands and looks out at the audience intently in a close-up, thinking—thinking about his dead family and his country's destiny.

Captain Chokhov (acted by A. Grachev) is one of the film's strongest characters, along with private Slivenko, brilliantly acted by G. Zhzhenov. This middle-aged former carpenter has attained a certain wisdom, a deep knowledge of what is most important in life. Unafraid of the Germans, this high-

spirited, witty fellow does not hide his feelings before his general, either: he is the soul of his platoon, company, and regiment. Wounded during the storming of the Reichstag at the end of the film we see him at work in peace-time: military engineers are building a bridge over a river, and suddenly we see the familiar carpenter, wielding his ax with a flourish, this time for a peaceful purpose.

Other sounds come to our ears—the sounds of life, so unlike those of the war that has just ended—the film draws this contrast sharply and expressively.

The years pass, but the theme of the Second World War does not lose its vitality. Films about these years of the Soviet people's mass heroism are made at every movie studio in the country today.

There were certain drawbacks in the filmic treatments of this theme in the past. Some films used the war as just a background against which a drama based on a conventional love 'triangle' was played out. Other films were so weighed down in descriptions of daily life that their characters' moral qualities and heroism were totally lost from view.

The second All-Union Cinematographers' Congress noted in its general report recently that the films which make up *Liberation*, 'truthfully showed the victory of Soviet arms and signalled a new stage in treating the theme of the Second World War. Not only because of the scale of the operations depicted in the Soviet troops' advance, but because *Liberation* rejects many of the past deficiencies in treating the war theme which made some films depict war-time events inaccurately and one-sidedly, unwittingly diminishing the feat of the people, the heroes who defeated fascism.'

## SOVIET CINEMA IN THE POST-WAR YEARS

The Second World War was a severe test of the Soviet Union's material and spiritual forces, as well as of the strength of the socialist system. This test was passed with flying colours. Thanks to the heroic struggle of the Soviet people, the war ended in total defeat for the nazi armed forces.

The victory of the Soviet Union over nazi Germany had enormous significance for the development of world culture and civilisation.

After the war socialism emerged as a great force in international affairs. The defeat of nazi Germany and imperialist Japan as a result of the war caused an upsurge in the national liberation movements and contributed to the collapse of the colonial system. A number of countries that had previously been colonial dependencies now became independent, sovereign states. All of this aided the development of democratic culture permeated with progressive ideas.

During the first seven years after the war, the Soviet Union went through a period of reconstructing the damage caused by the enemy. The Party and the people were faced with complex, responsible tasks. It was necessary not only to rebuild the areas of the country that had suffered and to attain pre-war levels in industry and agriculture, but also to surpass these levels in a relatively short period of time.

Under the Communist Party's leadership, the Soviet people achieved significant success in all sectors of the country's economy in the first post-war years.

Economic growth was accompanied by a growth in the people's material well-being, their ever-growing cultural needs, and their increasing demands on literature and art.

Soviet film-makers and people involved in film production had to solve a number of complex organisational, creative,

and technical problems in the early post-war years.

First of all, the Moscow and Leningrad film studios had to be brought back from their places of war-time evacuation and normal film-production had to be restored in Moscow and Leningrad. Time and necessary material, technical, and financial investments were required. That was why Soviet cinema production could not achieve pre-war levels in terms of quantity in the immediate post-war years, and only a very few films appeared on cinema screens.

An intensive reconstruction of the network of cinema theatres and film installations got underway, two-thirds of which had been destroyed or burned by the nazis.

Within five years after the end of the war, the number of film installations not only achieved pre-war levels, but significantly surpassed them. The number of film-goers also grew quickly, as did their demand for new and interesting movies. New, important problems faced art, including cinema, in the post-war period. From 1946-48, the Party Central Committee adopted a number of resolutions that had an important influence on encouraging new ideas from outstanding film-makers, in directing them towards depicting the best sides of the new Soviet man and treating the life of Soviet society in a vivid, well-rounded manner.

The Party's instructions aided the Soviet cinema to improve its production, raise its level of professional skill, and enrich its expressive means. In carrying out the resolutions' basic propositions, Soviet film-makers achieved outstanding creative successes in such films as: *The Young Guard*, *A Story About a Real Man*, *The Village Schoolteacher*, *The Third Blow*, *Mikhurin*, *Admiral Nakhimov*, *Meeting on the Elbe*, and others.

Production at the film studios in the various republics became livelier. The Ukrainian cinema produced such outstanding films as *The Third Blow*, *Taras Shevchenko*, and *An Intelligence Officer's Feat*. The Uzbekistan Film Studio made such noted successes as *Takhir and Zukhra*, and *Alisher Navoi*. The Turkmenian Studios turned out *A Bride From Far-Away*.

The Kazakh Studio produced *Dzhambul. Konstantin Zaslونov* was made at the Byelorussian Studio. The Azerbaijan Studio released the musical comedy *Arshin Mal Alan*. And the three youngest Soviet republics: Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia also began to develop their Soviet national film production in the post-war period.

However, during this same period, although Soviet cinema achieved indisputable successes that have become a part of history, there were also certain drawbacks that cannot be ignored.

One of these deficiencies was the one-sidedness of many historical films and films about the Second World War which depicted the people—the true creators of history—as a faceless mass, while one outstanding personality occupied the forefront position.

Apart from this there were other basic deficiencies—many films were excessively sentimental, had a tensely sort of splendour, and were overly pompous. For instance, films about collective farm life inevitably showed endless feasting and celebrating. The daily working life of the collective farm workers, their surmounting of the obstacles they encountered in life and in their work received little attention.

We should also remember that certain theoreticians saw this as a virtue, a step forward—and that was a very serious error, indeed.

Moreover, some critics made this trouble-free atmosphere and lack of conflict into a 'principle' of socialist realism. The very absence of sharp conflicts was taken to be an innovation in cinematic form that supposedly conformed to the new era. This theory, which was called the 'theory of absence of conflict', came into being above all as a result of an incorrect understanding of the processes taking place in the country during the transition from socialism to communism. Some film-makers and critics believed that, inasmuch as there were no antagonistic classes in the Soviet Union, therefore there were no grounds on which major conflicts and tensions could

arise between people. According to these critics, dramatic conflicts could only take place in works about clashes between the socialist and capitalist worlds. Films which showed Soviet life supposedly could not possibly have a dramatic conflict in the real sense, they could only contain misunderstandings.

Critics who held to this point of view made a grave error. They forgot that the development of socialist society emerges through a sharp struggle against the past. The past does not die away of its own accord, but struggles and defends itself and all its out-moded conceptions. Soviet cinema, which is one of the forms of cognition of reality, only reflects life accurately and in all its aspects when it shows the process of this struggle in artistic images on the screen.

A superficial artistic depiction of life without any conflicts only occurs when the artist has an insufficient knowledge of reality, when the director undertakes a film knowing only general tendencies and slogans, without having studied real material or made any observations in real life.

Another type of error is also very harmful. This is when certain artists have shown only the negative side of Soviet life in their works.

It is only when the artist has made a profound study of reality and when he is able to see life in terms of Marxist-Leninist principles and convey them in tangible, individualised images that genuinely great cinema can be made, films which depict life vividly and in all its aspects.

One such work, which was released soon after the war's end, was the film version of *The Young Guard* made by Sergei Gerasimov in 1948 from Aleksandr Fadeev's novel of the same title.

Leaders in Soviet literature and art strove above all to show the mass character of Soviet heroism in their works. *The Young Guard* shows the legendary youth underground organisation in the town of Krasnodon. The link between the young people and the Party underground which carried out a common plan of partisan warfare against the enemy was the film's main theme.

In *The Young Guard* director Sergei Gerasimov and cameraman Rapoport succeeded in vividly and faithfully recreating the atmosphere of the war and the severity of the surroundings in which the young guards acted and fought. We can see this in the scene showing that anxious night on which the young guards celebrate the anniversary of the Revolution, and in the scene showing the arrival of the Germans in Krasnodon, as well as in other episodes depicting the tragedy experienced by the occupied town. Skilful editing of the film also contributed greatly to its tense, dramatic quality. Especially expressive in this respect is the parallel montage of scenes showing the labour registration office being set on fire and the concert in the club which represents the high point of young people's activity and, at the same time, is a forewarning of their doom.

Gerasimov's approach to transforming the novel into cinematic language and enriching it with new material helped to bring out the main theme.

As we mentioned earlier, students from the Moscow Film Institute acted in *The Young Guard*. Gerasimov prepared them at great length for the film. He travelled with them to Krasnodon, where they studied historical materials on the spot, where they met the young guards' friends and relatives, acquired a feeling for their material, and studied the lives of their heroes. Gerasimov's direction of this film also had an important educational significance. It was a 'creative laboratory' of sorts in which his school, his system of preparing and training actors in the Film Institute was tested.

Gerasimov described his film in these words: 'It seemed to me that the book's strength was that its author, unlike many other authors who dealt with various heroic moments during the war, came to grips with this phenomenon not post-factum, but in life itself. He explains the strength of these young people in terms of their families, school, the Party, the underground in Krasnodon, and so on. That was the reason for the author's great success. I tried with all my heart to capture his style and make it cinematic.'



The above quotation shows how Gerasimov found the appropriate style of the film, which had an immediate and durable success with the public. This was no accident. The film brought to life the real heroic story of the Krasnodon underground, a recent story that had been profoundly experienced by the whole country, and showed the feat performed by the young heroes differently than did any other film of the time. The heroes are very ordinary, yet very dissimilar adolescents. Then there are their Party leaders: Protsenko (acted by V. Khokhryakov), calm and firm in his decisions, and Valko (acted by S. Bondarchuk), warm-hearted, but rather taciturn and melancholy.

Protsenko is a generalised portrayal of a Party leader. The director and actor were able to convey the great will-power possessed by the secretary of the underground regional Committee, his presence of mind coupled with his warm-heartedness. After all, Protsenko understands these young people and is capable of giving them support, stimulating and strengthening their self-confidence in difficult moments.

Apart from the main heroes *The Young Guard* also features many other Young Communists. Gerasimov's distinctive trait as a director is his ability to give each of his characters his or her own individuality. However, the young guards also have a trait in common: each of them was born and educated in socialist society. Love for their country, hatred for their enemy, Soviet patriotism, and Communist morality are part of their flesh and blood. For all of these young guards there is no other life than socialist life with its lofty moral standards of heroism.

Tamara Makarova played the relatively small, but important and dramatic part of a Soviet woman and patriot, the mother of Oleg Koshevoy. Makarova gave this role an inner dynamism and lofty poetic sense.

In working with his actors, director Gerasimov achieved great truthfulness, simplicity, and naturalness in their performances. He toned down actors' manner of speaking, not wishing to make the dialogues overly emotional. However,

the heroism of the young guards required that the director and actors convey a highly emotional intonation, a vivid and expressive manner of speaking. Once again, though, we would stress that the heroic words spoken by the young guards in the film are delivered with restraint, without superfluous eloquence or excessive emotion. The heroes' great inner power is felt through this restraint, along with their intense will and ideological conviction. The film's poetic resonance and genuine life-like feel is to a great extent a result of the acting style that Gerasimov successfully created among his students.

*The Young Guard* was a genuine hymn to man, to Soviet man—the war's hero. Gerasimov concentrated on disclosing the moral qualities of Soviet youth that appeared in the harsh crucible of war. The film traces the growing maturity of these young men and women who have come face to face with fascist barbarians devoid of any humane feeling. It was an enormous experience for those who made the film. 'Along with *The Young Guard*,' Sergei Gerasimov wrote afterwards, 'a new group of actors entered the cinema: I. Makarova, L. Shagalova, N. Mordyukova, M. Krepkogorskaya, O. and M. Ivanovs, K. Luchko, S. Gurzo, G. Romanov, G. Yumatov and, finally, S. Bondarchuk, who was soon to become a director himself.'

Sergei Gerasimov succeeded in raising his young actors to a level of interpretation that enabled them to portray on the screen the inner moral processes taking place in these girls and boys who became 'young guards'.

This process begins with their very first meeting with the enemy. Reviewers later gave special importance to this seemingly prosaic scene of fascist plundering: the nazi occupiers remove the children's shoes in a business-like manner and greedily dig through their suitcases in search of something to send to their wives, daughters, and girl-friends. The camera captures the young people's stunned, disdainful faces. This 'ordinary' episode shows the face-to-face conflict of

two different attitudes towards life. One of them says 'cannibals', and this brief appraisal is the conclusion the group naturally comes to after their first meeting with the invaders.

Young people with a clear conscience, brought up in the Soviet system, draw a conclusion for themselves that is clear, courageous, and uncompromising. Their moral purity, their readiness to perform a feat, and the feat itself were vividly, truthfully, and disturbingly presented in the film.

The film was a collective portrayal of the young generation of Soviet men and women, their moral purity, their ideological firmness, and their feat. *The Young Guard* has never left cinema screens.

Another outstanding film made in 1948, was *A Story About A Real Man*, which was already discussed above.

Films about heroes and events from the war, released soon after the war, were varied in their material, themes, and genres.

This was a result of the diverse manifestations of the Soviet people's heroism in battles at the front-lines, in underground activity, and in partisan detachments in the occupied territories. Many of these films were based on literary sources, which attested to the fruitful influence of Soviet literature on cinema.

However, in analysing the films adapted from novels, stories, and plays, it is immediately apparent that they are all independent works of art in which many literary heroes received a new existence thanks to the directors and actors.

It was a fundamental feature of many post-war Soviet films about the war that the best directors created not only fictional treatments of the Soviet people's generalised, typical traits, but also showed real characters with their genuine biographies on the screen. Biographical films of this type proved again and again that the sources of Soviet films were to be found in life itself.

We have already discussed Boris Barnet's *An Intelligence Officer's Feat* (Kiev Studio), the basis of which was the true biography of Soviet intelligence officer N. Kuznetsov.

In the years to come a number of books, films, and plays dealt with Kuznetsov.

This film is very rightly regarded as one of the first in the heroic-adventure genre in modern Soviet cinema. *An Intelligence Officer's Feat* was more than just a gripping plot full of cliff-hanging situations: the director was seeking to use the traditions of this genre to depict lofty and noble ideas on the screen. The film's heroes were not dominated by personal greed, or the thirst for acquisition, and the director stresses this wherever possible. Love for his country, Soviet patriotism, hatred for the enemy—these ideas underlie the hero's actions, and the director uses all the expressive cinematic means at his disposal. Dynamic, abrupt editing based on contrasts, thrilling plot twists, a psychologically gripping 'duel' between the Soviet agent and his experienced, cunning adversary, the nazi General von Rummelsburg—all this made Boris Barnet's film a perennial favorite on cinema screens.

In the post-war period Soviet film directors also made many outstanding films about the struggle for peace which unmasked war-mongers. Mikhail Romm's film *The Russian Question* (1947), based on a play by Konstantin Simonov, is founded on an artistic-publicistic treatment of Lenin's thesis about the existence of two cultures within one national culture. Another film by Romm, *Secret Mission* (1950), based on a script by K. Isaev and M. Maklyarsky, unmask secret plots against the Soviet Union undertaken by American and English imperialists during the Second World War. Both these films had vast importance at the time they were made.

In the war against nazi Germany, the Soviet Union never identified Hitler's clique with the German people and never aimed to destroy Germany as a state. After the defeat of the nazi army, the Soviet Union sought to help the German people rebuild their state on a genuinely democratic foundation.

Entirely different goals were pursued by American and English imperialists during the war. Grigori Aleksandrov's

film *Meeting on the Elbe* (1949), based on a script by the Tur brothers, tells of the policies pursued by the official representatives of two different worlds in occupied Germany.

*Meeting on the Elbe* was adapted from a play entitled *Governor of the Province*. The play told the story of how an American female spy steals a patent for an important discovery made by a German professor in the field of optics. This plot, however, could not contain everything the film-makers wanted to say about this important political subject. And so the play's material was expanded, its characters and themes deepened, and new facts introduced from real life. 'The swift development of important political events in the world made us constantly revise the script and the film, introducing new facts, expanding and giving greater depth to its content,' wrote director Aleksandrov.

The result was a film about the Soviet Army's noble mission in creating a democratic Germany, about the radical opposition between the Soviet and American occupying forces' policies and about the Soviet people's lofty moral qualities. The story about the patent came to have only secondary importance.

Grigori Aleksandrov is famous as a director of comedies, but *Meeting on the Elbe* showed a new side to his talent, making him a master of political satire with a flair for using cinematic details and lending them a publicistic quality.

The audience enters into the atmosphere of defeated nazi Germany from the very first scene.

As we are shown a general scene of the joyful meeting on the Elbe River between American and Soviet soldiers, the director immediately introduces us to the leading characters. The camera picks out the American General MacDermoth standing on a bridge surrounded by his retinue from among enormous crowd of people on the river's west bank. In sharp contrast to the ecstatic joy that simple ordinary American soldiers feel at the end of the war, cold restraint reigns on the bridge.

The film shows how sympathy for the Soviet Army and

the idea of friendship between peoples grows in ordinary American officers, who are represented in the film by Major James Hill (M. Nazvanov), a man who has had little previous interest in politics.

Nazvanov creates the figure of an ordinary American who sincerely believes that once the war with nazi Germany is over, real peace has come.

James Hill is not a Communist. When he meets the Soviet commandant Kuzmin for the first time, Hill gives him a dollar bearing the inscription: 'An American vehicle that can go anywhere in the world.' But after Hill gets to know Commandant Kuzmin better, he begins to feel a deep respect for the ideas that the Soviet officer represents. Saying goodbye to Kuzmin before his departure for America, discharged and stripped of his rank, Hill crosses out the old inscription and writes another: 'There is a truth stronger than the dollar in the world.'

*Meeting on the Elbe* vividly shows how totally different people—in terms of their nationality, social position, and political views—are brought together by the struggle for peace. The film contains many splendid portraits, above all, of Soviet men and women. One of the film's heroes is the Soviet Major Kuzmin (played by V. Davydov). He has dignity, an inner nobility, and intelligence. In his striving for peace, the Communist Kuzmin finds a common language with the American officer Hill, the German professor Dietrich (Yu. Yurovsky), and with the German anti-fascist Schultz (N. Nikitin). This unity, as the film convincingly shows, is the great strength of the peace movement, which became a serious obstacle on the path of the war-mongers. Another, lower world is shown through the American woman spy Sherwood, a role acted by famous screen actress Lyubov Orlova. Actor V. Vladislavsky ably interpreted the role of wheeling and dealing American General MacDermoth.

Mikhail Romm's films *The Russian Question* and *Secret Mission* also proved very topical. The former is written under

the influence of the writer's recent impressions from a visit to the United States in 1946. This is a sharply publicistic film. Romm retained the play's main idea, plot, and dramatic conflict, but added visual material to it, showing the contrast between the lives of Americans of different classes through documental footages.

The film is basically concerned with the conflict between progressive journalist Harry Smith and his boss, the powerful, reactionary publisher MacPherson.

The drama of the honest journalist Smith, who is forced to write a slanderous book about the Soviet Union, unmasks the myth of American freedom of the press, of creative freedom for writers and journalists in bourgeois America.

Expanding the framework of the play, the film's director created a politically biting work that artistically generalised various typical features of American life. The relations between the central characters skilfully show the struggle between two camps in America — the progressive intelligentsia and the reactionaries.

Publicistic sharpening of the dramatic conflict was aided by certain changes in the interpretation of the main figure, Smith. In the play Smith was a man who lived more in the past than in the present; the ideas that inspired him to fight came from the golden age of America under Lincoln. In the film this character becomes a tribune of the people and his ideas are turned towards the future. 'America is its people, we are America,' he says at the film's end.

In the play Smith at first accepts MacPherson's offer to write a book about the Soviet Union in agreement with the publisher's requirements and only later refuses, convinced after a trip to the Soviet Union that he cannot slander the Soviet people, who want peace, not war. In the film, Harry Smith is shown as a journalist of principle from the very beginning, not a downtrodden man. He agrees to travel to the Soviet Union in the hope that the publisher will give him



the possibility to express, if not outright, at least partially, his true opinion about the Soviet people.

The film shows how Smith's voice reaches the broad masses of the people and influences the minds of ordinary people who want peace on earth.

But in the film, as in the play, Smith is shown as a typical representative of an important segment of the American intelligentsia which, drawing its strength from bourgeois moral code, is far from socialist ideals and tries to defend its individualism in a world based on buying and selling.

The film shows clearly the destruction of Smith's illusion that honesty and democratic views in America can be combined with personal happiness founded on the dollar. His beloved Jessie (acted by Elena Kuzmina), who is ready to forget about conscience and honour for the sake of a trivial concept of happiness (a house with a white-picket fence), reveals to Smith all the baseness of the American philosophy of well-being.

Actor V. Aksyonov, who played the role of Smith, showed his character's evolution. At the film's beginning Smith is calm and self-contained. But as the action develops, certain noticeable changes take place in his behaviour. In the enormous auditorium Smith speaks bitingly against all that is reactionary in the bourgeois America of today.

Romm's other film dedicated to the peace struggle, *Secret Mission* is drawn from a real history of diplomatic treachery by Anglo-American imperialism during the Second World War.

In the winter of 1944-45, the Soviet Army, carrying out its great liberating mission, unleashed a mighty offensive which liberated the cities of Eastern Europe, and entered German territory. At the same time, the Allied armies began to retreat in the West. This situation gave rise to disquiet in the ruling circles of England and America; they feared that they would not be able to occupy key positions in West Germany and would lose the possibility to take the Ruhr Valley's heavy

industry into their own hands. American monopolists sent their representatives to Germany with a secret assignment—to hold negotiations with nazi generals about the possibility of their capitulation to Allied troops in the West.

*Secret Mission* tells the story of this criminal plot. The film's genre is very distinctive. Mikhail Romm is famous for his profound grasp of the nature of cinema and the great possibilities inherent in its expressive means. *Secret Mission* combines material that reproduces genuine events and facts from the last stage of the war and artistic conception directly arising from these facts.

In order to acquaint viewers with the situation, events, and main characters, Romm makes broad use of newsreel devices: visual material accompanied by a narrative text on the sound-track, which together disclose the mechanism of the intrigues going on behind the scenes.

After this, the film acquaints the audience with 'the secret mission' itself.

American representatives buy a list of nazi agents in the Balkans from the head of the nazi secret services, Schellenberg. The scene in which this 'right of inheritance' is transferred is accompanied by a series of shots showing the loathsome faces of these spies, *agents provocateurs*, and murderers.

Despite the fact that the film devotes so much space to negative figures' attempts, at the end a life-affirming idea dominates the film. The progressive forces are represented by an American pilot (N. Timofeev). But the peace camp is especially well represented by the Soviet intelligence agent, Masha (Elena Kuzmina).

Masha Glukhova pretends that she is a member of Kaltenbrunner's staff. Masha's life behind the enemy lines is filled with tense dramatic situations. The actress had to play a double role, so to speak: on the one hand, she had to behave in such a way as to make audiences believe that the Germans could trust her, while on the other hand, she had to play a patriotic Soviet woman in such a way that audiences would

love her and care about what happens to her. Kuzmina gave her heroine a mask of cold indifference. Only at moments, when the plot allowed it, did she show the traits of a charming Soviet woman through her cold, artificial mask. Masha's genuine courage and fearlessness only shows through in the last scene, in which she prefers a heroic death to a nazi prison.

The transition to peace demanded films that reflected contemporary Soviet reality. In recalling the first post-war films about life at peace, one automatically thinks immediately of *The Village Schoolteacher* (script by Maria Smirnova, directed by Mark Donskoy, and starring Vera Maretskaya). The film-makers did not strive for sensational effects, but gave the whole of their attention to one person's character, faithfully recreating the circumstances of her life.

A village schoolteacher is more than just someone who teaches children their ABC's—he or she is also a public figure. The life of village schoolteacher Varvara Martynova at first seems very ordinary and monotonous, yet she is a true romantic heroine, has an innate sense of her lofty duty before the people, sincerely loves children, has a deep understanding of her profession and, finally, she has an enormous faith in man and his best qualities. 'I think,' the young Varvara says to her husband-to-be Sergei Martynov, 'that if you instill good in a man for a long time and do this with a pure heart, any man, even a bad man, will change. Only you must do this with a pure heart.'

Varvara's personal drama occupies a central place in the film. Her husband, Sergei, a revolutionary, was arrested and exiled by the tsarist authorities. For many long years she awaits his return, but when they are reunited at last, she loses him again. After the October Revolution, Commissar Martynov is seriously wounded at the front during the Civil War and dies on the way to the village where Varvara is working and waiting for him.

One of the major Soviet newspapers wrote at the time that 'It is hard to believe that the same actress is playing

the frail, impulsive girl in the white cape, and old, grey-haired teacher that we see at the end of the film.'

Vera Maretskaya very skilfully shows the gradual development of the outstanding human qualities that have been a part of Varvara's character since girlhood. The actress shows how a lofty sense of her duty gradually tempers Varvara's character. Varvara is filled with joy and pride in her noble work. That is why the educative nature of this film is so great. There were also other interesting films made at this time about Soviet reality, among them, Grigori Aleksandrov's *Spring*, Ivan Pyriev's *Tale of the Siberian Land*, and others.

Another chapter of the present work has already discussed the great attention given by Soviet films in this period to the people's heroic actions in the past and outstanding figures from among the people. Apart from those films listed, we should also mention *Academician Ivan Pavlov*, *Mussorgsky*, *Michurin*, *Alisher Navoi*, *Rainis*, and *Taras Shevchenko*, which were dedicated to noted figures in Russian and other national cultures.

*Academician Ivan Pavlov* received wide acclaim. This was in great measure due to A. Borisov's performance in the title role. Pavlov's inner purity, his enormous energy, his powerful intellect, and the complex process of scientific research carried out by the great scholar—the actor succeeded in conveying all this truthfully and convincingly.

The film's director, Grigori Roshal, invested a great deal of skill in showing audience emotionally and intelligibly the struggle between different world-views. One particularly successful scene in dramatic terms shows Pavlov demonstrating his experiments with conditioned reflexes. Pavlov's scientific activity is the basis of the dramatic conflict. The audience for itself sees the history of Pavlov's great scientific discoveries. Having performed successful research into digestive system, the scholar goes on to experiments that help him formulate a theory about conditioned reflexes, make valuable discoveries

in the field of nervous activity and, finally, learn the secrets of the human brain.

The joining of scientific problems to artistic treatment of the main character's personality were very difficult for the director and actor to achieve, and they had to make certain sacrifices. Pavlov's scientific position is presented in the film in a somewhat simplified, elementary form, but Pavlov himself—a colourful personality—is an impressive figure in the film. The film's unevenness did not prevent it from winning broad public acclaim.

Director Grigori Roshal and actor Aleksandr Borisov made another film together, this time about the great Russian composer, Mussorgsky (1950). The actor disclosed a new side to his talent in this film.

'In portraying Mussorgsky,' A. Borisov recalled, 'we—the director, cameramen, and actor—paid especially close attention to the way our hero listened, the expression in his eyes, the way he moved... Mussorgsky listened avidly, as if absorbing all the sounds he heard. Mussorgsky's eyes were trusting and quickly changed expression in accordance with his mood. His eyes immediately gave away his feelings at any given moment.'

In *Mussorgsky* music served as the basic element in the plot development. It determined the basic dramatic conflict, the movements, and the rhythm. The figure of the composer was disclosed through his music.

The primary theme concerns the struggle between the realistic tendency in music represented by its founders, the members of the 'Mighty Handful', and the court aristocracy.

Like *Academician Ivan Pavlov*, *Mussorgsky* has its defects. The social contradictions between classes were not shown graphically enough. Neither of these films show 'ordinary' Russians sufficiently strongly. Mussorgsky makes use of a device encountered in many other biographical movies: it shows a fair at which the musician becomes acquainted with simple people and derives wisdom and inspiration from them.

Yet at the same time the people are shown as only a passive, faceless mass, a background, not a leading character, although the film speaks at length about the people as the inspiration for and source of Russian national art.

The film *Michurin* (1948) was directed and written by Aleksandr Dovzhenko. The figure of the brilliant Russian horticulturist, Ivan Michurin (acted by G. Belov) occupies stage-centre in the film. 'The whole complex content of the film is concentrated on Michurin,' wrote Dovzhenko. 'He is constantly present on the screen in all his complexity—a purposeful researcher and fighter, a passionate transformer of nature, a man who worked ceaselessly and possessed great will-power. All this required that the actor understand Michurin's ideas, grasp the essence of his world-view and scientific principles, and have clear idea of the historical role he played.' Dovzhenko's views as an author were so pronounced that he required the actor to have a deep understanding of the role and a subtle feeling for all its nuances in line with the author's interpretation. This left a strong imprint on Michurin, in whom all those who knew Dovzhenko sensed a similarity to the director; but this did not disturb viewers who knew the real Ivan Michurin from unanimously and categorically affirming that the screen Michurin was amazingly like his prototype. As a result of research into Michurin's life and scientific activity, Dovzhenko and actor G. Belov created a faithful, passionate portrait of a man of science, aflame with an inner fire, a thirst for creation, a man for whom the meaning of life lay in work.

*Michurin* was the very first colour film, and its director, cameramen L. Kosmatov and Yu. Kun, and scenic designers M. Bogdanov and G. Myasnikov succeeded in solving a number of complex artistic and technical tasks. Dmitry Shostakovich's musical score was also an organic part of the film.

The film *Alisher Navoi* (1948) was produced at the Tashkent Studios and directed by K. Yarmatov from a script written by A. Speshnev, N. Sultanov, and V. Shklovsky. This film dealt

with the great fifteenth-century Uzbek poet and thinker and was historically accurate. Its dialogue was deeply philosophical in meaning. The film recreates the towns and villages of Navoi's era, its ancient fortresses, towers, royal palaces and squares. All this together with the interesting and realistic acting by Uzbek actors lent the film historical colour and a vivid beauty. This film was shown successfully in many countries throughout the world.

Among the historical-biographical films released in the first five post-war years, we should especially mention *Rainis*, made at the Latvian Studios (1949) by director Yuly Raizman. This film told about the poet and revolutionary Janis Rainis. Rainis was shown at the very height of his creative powers, at a time when the revolutionary movement was gathering strength.

The film's director, Yuly Raizman wrote that 'the study of historical materials convinced us that the brightest pages in Rainis' life were linked with the revolutionary upsurge in Russia and Latvia during the 1905 Revolution. During these years Rainis worked in underground revolutionary circles, took part in strikes, and walked in the front ranks of demonstrations. His poems and songs urging people to fight for their freedom were read and sung at workers' meetings'.

The dramatic conflict in *Rainis* arises from the clash between two worlds: of Mayendorf, the governor, and the world of the Latvian people. The poet and revolutionary Rainis is shown as closely linked to the Latvian people, whom he fervently loved and to whom he gave all of his talent and inspiration. The film also discloses the historical fact that Rainis conceived of his people's destiny only together with Russia.

The role of Janis Rainis was played by J. Grantinš. He vividly conveyed the poet's lively temperament, that of a passionate revolutionary and romantic.

*Taras Shevchenko* (1951) was filmed by director I. Savchenko



at Kiev Studios. This film encompasses a formative period in the life of the great Ukrainian poet-revolutionary — 1841-59 — as he became a painter, poet, thinker, and revolutionary. Savchenko and Sergei Bondarchuk, who played the title role, tried to show Shevchenko in his true breadth — as a man who emerged from the people and raised himself to the heights of world culture, a man who gave vivid expression to the most advanced ideas of his time. In the film and in life, Taras Shevchenko was above all a fighter, the embodiment of a rebellious spirit and a burning desire for freedom and justice. The film convincingly shows the friendship and fraternal assistance between the favourite sons of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples.

The script for *Taras Shevchenko* was written in a sharply publicistic vein. The hero actively participates in a struggle which develops along three different lines. The first is Shevchenko's opposition to the autocracy in the name of human dignity and the people's right to create; the second is his struggle against bourgeois nationalism and liberalism; the third is Shevchenko's struggle against the liberal-reformist opposition. The first half of the film was somewhat weak and illustrative. It describes the historical milieu and Taras Shevchenko's meeting with people similar to himself in their ideas.

The central conflict — the struggle against the autocracy, reaction, and feudalism — is shown vividly. Shevchenko is by no means alone in this struggle. For this reason the second half of the film is more dramatic and artistically complete in every respect. Bondarchuk gives a talented performance as Taras Shevchenko.

*Taras Shevchenko* is a deeply internationalist film that accurately depicts the spirit of the Ukrainian people and their national poet.

Historical-biographical films had a great cultural significance, but some of them were also excessively rhetorical, sentimental, and oversimplified. Nevertheless, even these films had artistic virtues that Soviet cinema would be wrong to neglect.

The major changes that took place in Soviet life after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU (1956) were reflected in Soviet cinema, as they were in all areas of Soviet culture.

The resolutions passed at the Twentieth Party Congress noted that it was necessary, 'taking into account the importance of cinema as the most mass-orientated art-form, to take measures to increase film production, to raise its ideological and artistic level, and expand the chain of cinema theatres.'\* The Party gave film-makers concrete, yet broad-scale instructions for the future. New perspectives for creative activity were opened up, and it was recommended to set the men who were building a new life at the very top of the list of subjects to be treated. Along with all others engaged in Soviet cultural activity, film-makers drew a mighty stimulus for their work from Party recommendations and instructions.

New, interesting, and important creative searchings got underway, and a stubborn struggle began to strengthen the ties between cinema and the people's new life, to raise films' ideological content and artistic skill. The best traditions from earlier stages in Soviet cinema were actively continued and developed.

The Party Programme adopted by the Twenty-Second CPSU Congress (1961) contained important landmarks for the activity of artists in many art-forms, including those working in multi-national cinema: 'In the art of socialist realism, which is based on the principles of partisanship and kinship with the people, bold pioneering in the artistic depiction of life goes hand in hand with the cultivation and development of the progressive traditions of world culture. Writers, artists, musicians, theatrical workers, and film-makers have every opportunity of displaying creative initiative and skill, using manifold forms, styles, and genres.\*\*

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\* *The CPSU in Resolutions*, Moscow, 1971, Vol. 7, p. 164 (in Russian).

\*\* *Road to Communism*, Moscow, 1962, p. 578.

This question, which in the Soviet Union is of a concrete and practical nature, reflects the struggle to bring the basic propositions of the Marxist-Leninist programme to life. Marx and Engels wrote in *German Ideology* that not everyone would be able to become a Raphael in the future Communist society, but 'anyone in whom there is a potential Raphael should be able to develop without hindrance'\*. In a conversation with Clara Zetkin Lenin spoke about the role of art, which is not only to educate the masses, but to develop them, to raise man's intellect, will-power, feelings, and energy. This Leninist idea has acquired particular importance today, when awakening the Soviet people's talents and gifts, drawing them into the active creation of new forms of life is a concrete and practical task, the solution to which will determine to a great degree the rate of development of socialist society. The role of cinema—if we take into account its mass character—will achieve enormous importance in this respect.

All the subsequent CPSU congresses consistently widened the perspectives for further activity by film-makers, stressing that communist education was acquiring an importance of the highest order. And that in carrying this task an enormous role was to be played by that most mass-orientated of all art-forms: the Soviet cinema. That is why a sharp increase in film production became a constant phenomenon and attracted new creative personnel, especially at the studios in the Soviet republics.

Through extra-mural cultural courses, film lectures, and film clubs, cinema has become a widely-appreciated art-form. There is a Union of Soviet Cinematographers to which all professional film-makers belong. Absorbing all the best from the age-old traditions in literature, theatre, painting, graphic art, architecture, music, the applied arts, and publicism, Soviet cinema entered a new period in its development during these years, already having behind itself a rich

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\*Marx, Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1976, p. 416.

experience and outstanding accomplishments. Among the best films from this time we must count feature films about Soviet reality and the working class: *The Big Family*, *The Rumyantsev Case*, *Spring in Zarechnaya Street*, and *The Heights*.

*The Big Family* (1954) is a large-scale film, directed by Iosif Heifits from an adaption of V. Kochetov's novel, *The Zhurbins*. This film has kept its interest for audiences to the present day. It traces the lives of a dynasty of ship-building workers, the Zhurbins family. The director cast a whole gallery of talented actors in his film: B. Andreev, S. Lukyanov, A. Batalov, E. Dobronravova, N. Gritsenko, N. Sergeev, P. Kadochnikov. *The Big Family* received the award for best acting at the Seventh Cannes Film Festival in 1955. The press and film critics acclaimed it as an outstanding work about the new Soviet working class and the evolution taking place within this class. The eldest member of the family, Matvei (played by S. Lukyanov), was an especially interesting figure: a respected man who knows the value of his own working hands. But life has somehow moved on ahead of him, and as an old man he finds that he must seriously revise his relations with co-workers. This is hard for him to do, yet it is perhaps this difficult, dramatic situation that discloses his strength of character to its full extent. It might have seemed that his life alone would be enough for a full dramatic conflict, but other characters are also important in this film: each of the Zhurbins, Ilya (B. Andreev), Alexei (A. Batalov), and the others.

The role of Aleksei Zhurbins was played by a young actor just beginning his career in cinema, Alexei Batalov. Having worked in *The Big Family* with Iosif Heifits, a whole range of roles opened up before him. Heifits offered him the main role in his next film, *The Rumyantsev Case* (1956), in which Batalov again played a dramatic role, the driver Rumyantsev. Rumyantsev finds himself in a difficult situation because of the self-seeking, cowardice, and limited outlook of some of his friends. However, it is not criminals and cowards that set the tone for Soviet society and, despite the complicated

circumstances, honest people help Sasha Rummyantsev overcome all difficulties and reinstate his good name. *The Rummyantsev Case* is a fascinating treatment of the theme of moral purity and civil responsibility today.

*Spring in Zarechnaya Street* (1956) was made at the Odessa Studios by young, then unknown directors, F. Mironer and M. Khutsiev, who had studied at the Moscow Film Institute with I. Savchenko (who died early). The film tells the story of a young schoolteacher who is sent to work immediately after graduation at a school for young workers, where she meets Sasha, a steel-worker. A metallurgical factory and the lives of young people today—this is the seemingly simple milieu in which the film's action takes place. But the young film-makers departed from all the clichés in handling this situation, and made a truly innovative film debut. They disclosed the unusual in the usual and examined life in a fresh and bright manner. *Spring in Zarechnaya Street* was a major step in telling of life today and in the development of Soviet cinema.

*The Heights* (1957) was directed by A. Zarkhi from a book by E. Vorobyov and, despite certain faults in its plot, it was fascinating in its depiction of the life of young construction workers who work at dizzying heights. The leading roles in both *Spring in Zarechnaya Street* and *The Heights* were played by young actor N. Rybnikov, who had a sure touch and flair for portraying his contemporaries.

We should also include in this list the films *Life's Lesson*, *The First Wave*, and *This Is the Way It Began...*, the latter dealing with agricultural workers. The first of these films was directed by E. Gabrilovich and Yu. Raizman, who had worked together many times before. *Life's Lesson* (1955) was an attempt—and a successful one for that time—to analyse human character from the psychological point of view. Cameraman Sergei Urusevsky made a major contribution to this film by his landscapes, which brilliantly created the atmosphere of one of the major Soviet construction sites of that time.

*The First Wave* and *This Is the Way It Began...* were made almost simultaneously, but by different directors, and their theme was the same: in answer to the Party's call people came flocking to the long-neglected steppe land in the eastern part of the country. Veteran director Mikhail Kalatozov gave the first of these films a broad sweep, while Lev Kulidzhanov and Yakov Segel, working together, gave their film a more intimate sense. But both films created truthful pictures of heroic labour performed by the virgin land cultivators.

These films were by no means the only films to develop the theme of collective farm in a new, realistic, and accurate manner. There was a great deal of scope here for creative originality: each of the directors who dealt with the theme of the village interpreted it in their own way, without repeating anything from previous films. If the former films about the village were for the most part lively, hearty comedies that did not touch on the difficulties of village life and work, the new stage in the ideological and philosophical analysis of life caused artists to develop a new, truthful cinematic language capable of expressing greater content. V. Tendryakov's story 'Son-in-Law' was brought to the screen by the young director Schweitzer in a highly realistic film (1956).

Serious questions were touched on in this film, which was directed against the psychology of 'what's mine is mine'. The film disclosed numerous conflicts within the post-war village. The new, socialist psychology of the film's two young heroes—Fyodor (N. Rybnikov) and Stesha (N. Mordyukova)—leads them to struggle against the old ways.

Young director S. Rostotsky devoted his film debut, *Land and People* (1956), and his next film, *It Happened in Penkovo*, to everyday life in the Soviet village, its difficulties and joys. He showed a gift for subtle observation in his disclosure of complicated human relations. *It Happened in Penkovo* featured Vyacheslav Tikhonov acting the part of a village tractor-driver, Matvey Morozov, a highly distinctive character, timid, yet bold at the same time.

Village life was also the subject of a major philosophically-oriented film by Aleksandr Dovzhenko and Yulia Solntseva, *Poem About the Sea*. After Dovzhenko's death, his wife and colleague, Yulia Solntseva, directed a film on the basis of a script he had written not long before his death filled with his own philosophical reflections on the past, present, and future. Solntseva faithfully retained Dovzhenko's ideas and style. In years to come film historians and theoreticians throughout the world studied *Poem About the Sea* with great interest, as they did all Dovzhenko's work. The film's depth and poetic quality, its philosophical striving to show in an elevated romantic form the spiritual beauty of the Soviet people who have transformed the face of the earth, their titanic labour, struggle, and victory—all this is a subject of profound study even today. Aleksandr Dovzhenko's contribution to cinema and Soviet culture, a contribution that has had a constant influence on artistic practice, was disclosed in an original fashion in this film.

The fact that Soviet cinema in this period produced such highly contrasting works as the deeply philosophical *Poem About the Sea*, as well as a whole series of jolly comedies was a sign of the times. The generic, thematic, and stylistic framework of socialist realism was being expanded in Soviet multinational cinema at the time, and fresh, new energy was flowing into it.

Films like *Carnival Night*, *The Unyielding*, and *The Girls* speak convincingly about the continuation of the comic genre in Soviet cinema. These films marked the debuts of young directors and a number of young actors. But alongside them there were also older comic actors, like Igor Ilinsky, one of the great comedy stars of stage and screen.

'I was one of the first actors that he worked with, because before *Carnival Night* he hadn't done any movies of this type,' said Igor Ilinsky in recalling his work with director E. Ryazanov in *Carnival Night*. He continued: 'As a director, he is able to make actors believe in themselves.' Audiences continue



to love *Carnival Night* (1956) today—a bright, merry film full of tongue-in-cheek humour and sharp satire on bureaucracy and indifference.

Heroism during the Second World War, as well as in the early years of the struggle for Soviet power, continued to exert a fascination for many film-makers of the older and younger generations. Directors tried to disclose the nature of Soviet heroism in war-time. Particularly noteworthy were the films: *The Cranes Are Flying*, *The House That I Live In*, *The Fate of a Man*, *Ballad of a Soldier*, *The Communist*, *The Forty-First*, etc. These films are not only interesting and significant in themselves, but also because a whole range of talented young directors, script-writers, actors, and cameramen took part in making them.

*The Cranes Are Flying* (1957) was directed by Mikhail Kalatozov from a script by playwright V. Rozov. Sergei Urusevsky was the film's cameraman, and his photography lent it a special brand of elevated romanticism. Especially expressive were the scenes showing Boris's (A. Batalov) departure for the front, Boris's death, and the welcome for the soldiers returning home from the war.

*The Cranes Are Flying* was awarded the highest prize—the Golden Palm—at the Eleventh Cannes Film Festival, and actress Tatyana Samoilova was given a special award for her performance in the main female role. Sergei Urusevsky was given an award from the French Higher Technical Commission. The film received world-wide acclaim. The film showed the countless sufferings that war causes people in a highly dramatic fashion, with a deep understanding of man's inner world. Continuing the best traditions of cinematic socialist realism, the film-makers disclosed the steadfastness and spiritual strength of Soviet people in the war. Veronica (T. Samoilova), Boris (A. Batalov), and other Soviet men and women were important characters with a rich inner life.

*The House I Live In*, directed by Lev Kulidzhyanov and Ya. Segel (1957) from a script by I. Olshansky, showed how

events in the country's life affected the lives of ordinary Soviet people. The events in the film encompass a large period of time, but the main emphasis is given over to the episodes devoted to the Second World War, which is depicted with great poetic dramatism. There is no high-flown pathos, everything is very simple, but the viewer is overwhelmed by the moral beauty and steadfastness of the Soviet people. The film was awarded many prizes at international film festivals. Critics very justly stressed that the personal lives of the film's heroes were shown on a broad scale, were given profound meaning, and disclosed the features of this heroic time in a moving fashion.

Grigori Chukhrai's two films, *The Forty-First* (1956) and *Ballad of a Soldier* (1959) moved him into the front ranks of Soviet film-directors. We have already discussed the second film in this book. We should only mention that Grigori Chukhrai's distinctive poetic gift, his heroic romanticism was immediately acclaimed. The second film was awarded the Lenin Prize and many other awards at international film festivals. But audiences knew and appreciated Chukhrai's talent earlier, from his film debut with *The Forty-First* (from a story of the same name by B. Lavrenev).

Like *The Forty-First*, the film by E. Gabrilovich and Yu. Raizman, *The Communist* tells of events in the first years after the Revolution. The atmosphere of *The Communist* would seem to be fairly prosaic at first glance, but it contains many difficult circumstances, losses, and sacrifices. The film's hero, the center of attention, is an ordinary fellow, a warehouse worker named Gubanov, a role that was movingly performed by Evgeni Urbansky, who was highly acclaimed for his performance here and in subsequent films. (After Urbansky's untimely death during filming of *The Director* in 1968 a documental film dedicated to his memory, *Evgeni Urbansky*, was released.) In *The Communist*, demobbed soldier and Communist Vassily Gubanov gives all of his effort to peaceful socialist labour on the construction site of the first Soviet power station.

The actor was able to show the enormous creative energy, passion, and revolutionary single-mindedness of his hero, who firmly believes in the triumph of Communism.

'The film posed a very important question: what sort of person should a Communist be,' Urbansky wrote. 'I wanted Gubanov to make every viewer measure up his own life against high standards, to think about what he has done and is doing for the triumph of Communism, to think about his everyday life.'

*The Communist* was highly praised by Soviet critics and entered into the history of cinema as a vivid example of the creation of the character of a progressive man in Soviet society.

While speaking of the gallery of young talents who were given a wide range of opportunities during these years, we should not forget A. Alov and V. Naumov, who made their debut in Kiev with the film *An Anxious Youth* (1955, from a script by V. Belyaev and M. Bleiman) and *Pavel Korchagin* (1957, from a script by K. Isaev based on Ostrovsky's novel, *How the Steel Was Tempered*), and later continued their careers as directors at Mosfilm Studios, where they made *The Wind* (1959) from their own script. Films directed by Alov and Naumov were concerned with the Revolution and the Civil War. They passionately glorified the severe romanticism of feats performed for the revolutionary cause, including sacrifice of one's life. Their first films were distinguished by tense and dramatic action and a dynamic rhythm. Alov and Naumov's directorial skill was characterised by a vivid artistic form, close attention to detail, and highly original, dynamic editing.

Although Soviet cinema in the 1950s concentrated its attention on modern life and Soviet people, the heroes of the Civil and Second World wars, the builders of a peace-time society, it also produced screen adaptations of Soviet and world literary classics. Adaptations of Shakespeare's *Othello*, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, Sholokhov's

*And Quiet Flows the Don*, a number of Chekhov's works (*The Grasshopper*, *Lady With the Dog*, etc.), and Alexei Tolstoy's *Ordeal* were the most important screen treatments of literary classics made during this period. It is particularly noteworthy that the adaptation of *Othello* by one of the oldest Soviet directors, Sergei Yutkevich, received world acclaim. At the Ninth Cannes Film Festival (1956) *Othello* was awarded the prize for 'Best Director'. The complex role of Othello was performed with great tragic power by Sergei Bondarchuk.

Grigori Kozintsev's *Don Quixote* also enjoyed enormous success within the Soviet Union and abroad. The title role was performed by one of the most talented Soviet stage and screen actors, N. Cherkasov.

Director Ivan Pyriev, famous for his many screen musical comedies, also turned to adaptations of the classics. *Nastasya Filippovna*, the first part of Dostoevsky's novel, *The Idiot*, was brought to the screen by Pyriev in 1958. This was the beginning of a new stage in the career of this talented director, who was attracted by distinctive individuals and tempestuous clashes of passion on the screen.

Sergei Gerasimov's screen treatment of Mikhail Sholokhov's *And Quiet Flows the Don* (1957-58) merits special attention. The film developed as a folk drama, conveying the great truth of human characters born in revolutionary struggle. The dramatic life of the Don Cossacks, the novel's heroes, was conveyed in the film trilogy with extraordinary artistic truthfulness. This trilogy won many prizes at international film festivals, including those at Brussels, Karlovy Vary and Moscow. Critics universally praised Gerasimov's work in bringing the novel to the screen faithfully and with a broad sweep.

The phenomenon of Soviet cinema, i.e. its outstanding, extraordinary significance, began to appear in the period we are now discussing—the fifties. One Moscow critic wittily observed once that the nature of art is such that it is easier to depict the raising of a flag over the Reichstag than the

raising of a flag over a new blast-furnace, and this is only too true—for cinema is an art-form that is not only visual, but dramatic as well. In other words, it is harder to poeticise the heroic content of everyday work on the screen. Nevertheless, a new important task faced Soviet cinema in the fifties: along with continuing the profound treatment of the feats performed by the defenders of our socialist country, the cinema had to create poetic images of peaceful workers. This task has never disappeared from Soviet cinema. While the Soviet Union continued to build communist society on a grand scale, it was necessary to present on the screen the artistic truth—capable of moving millions of viewers—about heroic labour.

Directors of the older generation continued to show their strength, skill, and experience with new films during these years: S. Gerasimov, S. Yutkevich, G. Kozintsev, I. Pyriev, Yu. Raizman, and others. Gifted directors of the younger generation took their places alongside them: S. Bondarchuk, G. Chukhrai, R. Chkheidze, S. Rostotsky, and many others. The link between innovation and the further development of established traditions in Soviet cinema affirmed itself anew.

Born of the October Revolution, Soviet cinema has continued to develop, disclosing in our own day the revolutionary spirit in its very depths, in its affirmation of the socialist realist method. Service to the people determines its thematic range, its choice of heroes, its stylistic searching, and its unflagging social optimism. This is the source of the ever-increasing social force of Soviet cinema, its militant spirit, its creative intolerance of ambiguity or lack of clarity.

At the present stage, too, Soviet cinema attaches great importance to literature, to the script as the ideological and artistic basis of a film. The best films of the 1950s had extremely well-written scripts by professional writers. Along with new directors, new script-writers also entered cinema.

New actors also began careers on the screen during this period, and they earned the love of audiences on an equal

footing with actors of the older generation.

The visual aspect of cinema also grew richer. Wide-screen, wide-format, and colour films came into being, and the perfection of cinematic technology contributed greatly to the creative work of cameramen and designers.

Musical scores also kept apace of developments in cinema. And so ended the 1950s in Soviet cinema.

## THE CURRENT SCENE

The years and decades pass, and the distance in time grows, enabling us to see more clearly the direction art has taken, and we sometimes revise our evaluations, rejecting single-mindedness and extremes in our views. This is only natural and inevitable. Today we can see the history of Soviet cinema more clearly and better understand the creative problems that arose on its path. Many of them are still important today, and are still facing contemporary film-makers, although in a different form.

The 1960s and 1970s were a rich period in Soviet cinema for the new range of problems it treated, its new searchings, and the polemics that took place within the industry. At the beginning of this period a number of films small-scale and intimate in tone were made. Today they occupy a modest place in the repertoire, but at the time their appearance was justified by the artist's need to redefine his points of departure.

The resolutions of the Party Central Committee that outlined ways of overcoming a number of problems in film-themes, script-writing, and directing had an enormous influence on the 1960s. The need for a closer link between the artist and society was stressed. The 1962 resolution 'Measures for Improving the Leadership of the Development of Feature Films' pointed out a need for film-makers to take into account the ideological and artistic influence of the cinema on the opinions, convictions, aesthetic tastes, and behaviour of Soviet people, especially Soviet youth.

The First Constituent Assembly of the USSR Union of Cinematographers took place in November, 1965. A message of greetings sent by the Party Central Committee stressed that history had given a great responsibility to Soviet artists, including film-makers: by raising important, topical problems, Soviet film-makers should clearly see the prospects for society's development and, by their inspired creative work, they



should actively participate in the Soviet people's great struggle for Communism.

The Union of Soviet Cinematographers takes an active part in carrying out the tasks set by the Party. 'The people's demands on the cinema are great and varied,' said L. I. Brezhnev in his address to the collective at Mosfilm Studios, the largest film studios in the Soviet Union. 'Millions of viewers expect new films of all genres and types from you, films with significant content and interesting treatments, films that stir audiences to think, help them to understand the meaning of our time better, truthfully show the living figures of our contemporaries, and strengthen noble moral principles in men which are urgently needed by the builders of Communism.'\*

An important event in the life of Soviet cinema was the CPSU Central Committee resolution 'Measures for the Further Development of Soviet Cinema' (1972), which examines questions regarding cinema within the context of all the tasks for the building of Communism.

The CPSU Central Committee Report at the Twenty-Fifth Congress of the CPSU rated highly films on themes connected with the Revolution, the working people's struggle for the victory and consolidation of the socialist social structure, the feats of the Soviet people in the Second World War, and problems in the education of the new man. The government awards conferred on Mosfilm and other studios in these years, as well as on a large number of script-writers, directors, actors, composers, artists, engineers, and other film workers showed the Party's continuing attention to and high appraisal of cinema. The Union of Soviet Cinematographers was awarded the highest state distinction—the Order of Lenin.

Many films made during the 1960s and 1970s became important artistic, cultural, and social events.

Many films in the early sixties strove to analyse the complex, contradictory tendencies that characterised life in the first

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\* L.I. Brezhnev, *Following Lenin's Course*, Moscow, 1974, Vol. 4, p. 400 (in Russian).

post-war decade, to tell about the major changes that had taken place after the Party's Twentieth Congress. This theme was impressively treated in *Clear Skies* (1961, script by Daniil Khrabrovitsky, directed by Grigori Chukhrai), *People and Beasts* (1962, script-writer and director Sergei Gerasimov), *Silence* (1963, adapted from a novel by Yury Bondarev, directed by Vladimir Basov). These films have many points in common arising from their themes and material; they are all highly dramatic, operate at a high emotional level, and convey the film-makers' passionate stance. They are also highly publicistic, without any half-tones, and their characters are distinctly polarised.

All their details and intonations were closely linked with the context of their times, and at the time of their release these films produced lively interest among broad circles of viewers, who understood their authors' thoughts almost without the need for words. Today however, they are less informative, especially for younger viewers who know little of the period in which they were made, and their publicism and passionate views may make them seem too single-minded.

A similar style is typical of many films concerned with different themes that were released at this time. Among them is Mikhail Romm's *Nine Days of One Year* (1962), which produced much heated discussion at the time. This film was innovative in many respects, including its introduction of new setting for the action in fictional films. This is the world of modern physics laboratories, of scholars engaged in the most advanced areas of science, areas that are not only physically dangerous, but also morally complicated, for problems arise here that are not only scientific in their implications, but also moral, philosophical, and political—problems concerning life, war and peace, and the future of our planet and mankind. The film-makers were attracted by the lives of people whose professions brought them into direct contact with these problems.

The film's main character is Gusev, a young atomic physicist who, along with his teacher, exposes himself to severe risk to his life for the good of science. But he is happy, nonetheless, because he knows that the results of their research are needed, that he is carrying out a lofty duty in life, and that he cannot do otherwise.

The expanding thematic range of Soviet films, along with their stylistic searchings is the characteristic feature of cinema in the 1960s and 1970s. Sergei Gerasimov made films at this time that audiences received as the author's reflections on important topical questions of contemporary life.

These films were *The Journalist*, *By the Lake*, *To Love Man*, and *Mothers and Daughters*. They were characterised by strict psychological accuracy in the actors' performances and an objective narrative manner; at the same time, Gerasimov tried to stir up the audience's social consciousness. The technological and ecological problems raised in the films (for instance, the danger of polluting Lake Baikal, that uniquely fresh-water lake, urban construction in climatically difficult areas of Siberia, etc.), are not only significant in themselves, but are also a means of initiating discussion about man's civil duty, about labour, and new standards of life arising from lofty ideas and a sense of responsibility for the country's future. Broad-scale discussion about solutions to major problems of state, and the participation in these discussions of engineers, scholars and even recent high-school graduates is affirmed in these films as a norm of Soviet life.

The film *Your Contemporary* (1967, script by E. Gabrilovich, directed by Yuly Raizman) was also a noteworthy event. The film-makers stress the idea of each individual's responsibility in the face of the growing requirements of our time. The focal point of the plot is the Communist Gubanov (acted by I. Vladimirov), the boss of a major construction site who displays great strength of principle and resolution in a complicated situation. He goes personally to a ministry to show

the need to halt construction of a factory on the grounds that the project is technologically out-of-date. The role of Professor Nitochkin (played by N. Plotnikov) was brilliantly performed, as a comic variation of the theme. We should also mention the film's somewhat unusual structure—the audience does not know at the end who is right: Gubanov, who proposes a bold new project in place of the old one, or his opponents, who defend their point of view with very solid, serious arguments. The film does not provide an answer, because in the given case the outcome is not considered important. The film's task, said the director, was 'to depict contemporary life in all its complexity and indivisible links to political, economic, and moral questions.'

Another film by Raizman, *What If This Is Love?* (1962), has a similar structure and style, and is concerned with Soviet young people. In its time this film produced heated discussion among film critics, teachers, and audiences of all types. It was criticised for too one-sidedly resolving the problem of 'fathers and children' and continuity between generations.

The theme of young and school occupies a large place in the films of the 1960s and 1970s. This is not only because the majority of movie-goers are between fourteen and twenty-four years of age, as sociological surveys show. Many films on this theme are also addressed to viewers from older age groups: parents and teachers for whom educational problems are especially important today.

These films are undoubtedly important and interesting in that they treat themes that are of vital concern to everyone, but they have produced some fundamental objections on the part of teachers, and from the artistic point of view their structure and style left something to be desired. They were distinctive in that they refused to resolve the conflict or problem they showed on the screen. The film-makers took the stand that an artist's task was to pose questions, not to answer them. In the early 1960s this was considered fashionable and was much discussed, but today its inadequacy is obvious.

The strength of realistic art has always been that the artist depicts life's truth in the light of the highest moral, aesthetic, and social ideals. If he does not do this, the artist turns into a mere describer of the minutiae of daily life, a naturalist, who at best aims only to faithfully reproduce a milieu he has observed. But in fact, even with such a method, the author gives his own definite appraisal of the conflict he shows and suggests an unambiguous resolution of it, although he is not concerned with whether it is accurate or not.

*What If This Is Love?* is a bitingly satirical study of the insensitivity of teachers and administrators, as well as parents, to two high school students who fall in love. However, critics argued that their love as shown on the screen lacks artistic and psychological conviction, and asked with good reason: 'What if this isn't love?'

This particular film is fairly representative of the type of film that lacks sufficient artistic and psychological conviction in depicting the situation on which its story is based. The reality of the situation, its life-like tangibility, is not shown, although this is the most elementary requirement of a work of art; the existence of the situation is only postulated and the viewer is supposed to accept it without question. The artist thus introduces certain 'rules of the game', takes up a position in the realm of 'conditional art' which, given the photographic and documental nature of cinema, is acceptable in only a few genres (eccentric comedy, musicals, etc.).

Modern Western cinema is characterised not by its realistic depiction of some key moment in the action, but rather a 'conditional' depiction of it. The film-maker seems to believe that it is enough to give one 'official' conclusion, and this should be enough to satisfy the audience. Realistic art, however, does not set any rules of the game—the viewer, the reader, and the listener expect the artist to possess total psychological and artistic conviction. Some films from the early 1960s, and a few from later periods, draw on creative principles which permit the artist to limit himself to only a few selected aspects

of the audiences' perceptions, rather than to all of their perceptions. In *Your Contemporary*, for instance, which was acclaimed as an important event at the time of its release, and has remained such in many respects today, the basic situation which produces the plot could not, in the opinion of specialists, have arisen. Competent critics raised similar objections to other films with the same stylistic manner (*Nine Days of One Year*, *The Hottest Month*). Films of the late 1950s and early 1960s also reflected negative aspects of their period, which was in many respects a transitional period of overcoming over-simplification, a single-minded reflection of life, an artificial construction of life on the screen, an overly illustrative approach, and insufficient direct observation of life itself.

As a counter-balance to this speculative method, filmmakers also showed interest in sociological observation. Using this method, they portrayed in their films a given social or professional milieu—a factory collective, a collective farm brigade, long-distance drivers, etc.; they then focused on situations typical of this milieu, its unsolved problems, and tendencies in its future development. Films of this type are interesting for their close description of a given milieu and atmosphere, but they are somewhat less satisfactory at depicting people; work of art cannot be limited to a sociological description of life, leading characters are introduced and a plot is used to advance the narrative. This very often leads to an uneven mixture of styles.

*Three Days in the Life of Victor Chernyshev* (script by E. Grigoryev, directed by M. Osepyan) captured the attention of critics when it was released. The film attempted to sociologically depict the milieu of adolescents, for whom application of their leisure time is always a problem because of gaps in their intellectual and psychological development. A film on this subject can always be a valuable contribution to the study of social life in all its positive and negative aspects. True, research of this type would fall more naturally into the province of documental film. But *Three Days* was a fictional

film, with a plot, characters, and a compositional structure to fit genre, which significantly shifted its emphasis and gave rise to certain objections from critics and general audiences. They noted the film's deficiencies in the educational respect, and educators and parents pointed out with good reason that films about children and adolescents too often show what they should not do, rather than what they should be doing. In films of this type audiences seek, above all, answers to questions that they have not yet settled to their own satisfaction, questions that arise before every adolescent when responsible decisions must be made and one's path in life chosen. Similar objections raised with regard to Marlen Khutsiev's two films, *I Am Twenty* (1964) and *July Rain* (1966), and there were sound reasons for these doubts.

Khutsiev's young heroes are by no means self-satisfied. They are searching for their own identities and goals in life; they are shown at a moment, or more accurately, during a period, of reevaluation. Unfortunately, however, we get the impression that the film-makers themselves are going through this period, and therefore, they cannot offer a profound solution to the important subject of an individual's moral formation. This peculiarity of the director's position also clearly carries over into other aspects of the film; the script is inadequate, for there is no central conflict, no plot development, or evolution in the characters. The film basically describes a given condition, illustrating it in different scenes and episodes which are only internally linked. This stylistic approach offers many advantageous possibilities: the main characters' constant emotional state makes it possible to choose certain expressive, significant details. Works created by this method, and they exist in other art-forms as well possess a good number of artistic virtues, but also have one indisputable defect—that they do not solve the problems set by the artist, and this—especially in cinema, which has such a powerful influence on its audience—attests to lack of psychological and civil maturity.



Despite its faults, and the lack of a clear viewpoint, *July Rain* very realistically reflected several important problems typical of modern-day life. The film contains no heroes as such. Each character is a person of today, and is a good specialist in his own field. Yet there are moments when a man notices in amazement that life often lacks something very important. Is this the emotional tone of modern life in general, as certain artists abroad try to show? This film gives another answer—simple, but firm—by the whole structure of its circumstances and characters, independently of what the author's concrete idea may have been. In short, people lack inner life. To be stuffed of facts and information is not enough. It is no accident that the characters in *July Rain* are nearly all engaged in the exact sciences, people with a mathematical turn of mind, i.e. inclined to reject everything that cannot be measured in quantity or jotted down as a formula; that is why certain aspects of life remain closed to them. They do not realise their inner, moral, and civil lack of maturity, they only have a confused sense of not being satisfied, of an inner emptiness, which they try to fill with amusements like the picnic shown in the film, with its carefully contrived animation. Groups of this type close themselves into a narrow framework circumscribed by all their habits and customs, their micro-culture, so to speak. Because it has no organic basis, however, this micro-culture is usually not very productive.

A serious, business-like approach, intelligence, an outstanding personality, and creative daring are attractive features in a man. All this enters into our conception of a man of today, but it is only part of the concept and supposes that a certain basis underlies it—inner maturity and civil responsibility. Without this, individuality simply does not exist, a man is intellectually infantile and faceless.

Other films dedicated to youth and its problems also produced a wave of interest: *We'll Get By Till Monday* (script by G. Polonsky, directed by S. Rostotsky), *Falling Leaves* (script by A. Giginadze, directed by O. Ioseliani), *There was a Singing*

*Blackbird* (script by O. Ioseliani, D. Eristavi, and others, directed by O. Ioseliani).

The main character in *We'll Get By Till Monday* is the history teacher Melnikov. During his classes explanations of new material somehow naturally turn into discussions about life that are of vital interest to everyone. It is significant that the class discusses Peter the Great, Dostoevsky, and the hero of the 1905 Revolution, Lieutenant Schmidt. Melnikov tells the class that it is only natural to feel that these outstanding people are not men of today, but it would be a great error not to see what they do have in common with today's world, as well. History teachers always occupy a special place in school life, for their subject points out time, a continuity without which there is neither culture nor society. Melnikov tried to educate his pupils to be creative in whatever they do, to have a lofty civil sense, and he clearly sees the prospects for Soviet society's development: to do everything to make each person feel himself an individual, have a sense of inspiration, to be able to develop all of his abilities and gifts and add to mankind's common wealth. Although this film was on the whole well received, there was also some opposition to it, for the most part from teachers and educational personnel, and their objections to certain stylistic features and emphasis in the content were well grounded. The vital problem of the development and perfection of identity was treated only within the context of school, without taking into account that the psychology and physiology of the adolescent is very specific, without adding any correctives to the general impression derived from this context.

Similar objections were raised to other films on school life; *What If This Is Love?* (already mentioned), and *Welcome!*, a satirical comedy. Criticism in these two films, as in *July Rain* was unfortunately abstract and not clearly formulated; the film-makers had not yet explained the material to themselves, were only superficially acquainted with modern philosophical and social problems, and had not analysed their

complex connotations for today adequately. They did not even touch on the question of continuity, and consciously so—although at this period not everyone was fully aware of its importance.

Inner maturity, as well as civil consciousness, is shown in the treatment of the story in the Georgian film, *Falling Leaves*. Two young men graduate from a wine-making technical school and are sent out to their first jobs. One of them immediately 'takes his place in the collective', but not in the best sense for he quickly adapts to all the abuses which are cloaked by outwardly friendly, patriarchal traditions, but which in fact display the most blatant lack of social conscience. The second fellow does not like pretending not to notice anything or, the only other alternative, pretending that things are just fine. He rejects falsehood, and apparently will always do this, in everything. He is a man of today in the real meaning of the word. His active civil spirit, his inner maturity—despite his youth—as the film stresses, did not come about of itself, but has emerged from the depth of revolutionary and popular traditions.

This theme of spiritual continuity, 'time-links', is a major theme in many films from the mid-sixties: *They Were the First*, *Pavel Korchagin*, *The Boss of Chukotka*, *The First Teacher*, *No Password Needed*, *Time*, *March On!*, *Volunteers*, and *Rollcall*. These films treat history, both recent and distant, for it is necessary to have a deep understanding of today's place in the entire historical path of our country and our people. The film-makers did not simply reproduce the past on the screen, they realised that its contemporary aspect is also important, those philosophical moments in the past that have significance for us today.

These films were not unqualified successes, but they treated the theme of young people constructively. It gradually became clear that this theme could not be treated independently of continuity between generations, popular cultural traditions and lofty spiritual values.

*Byelorussia Station* (script by V. Trunin, directed by A. Smirnov) was an enormous popular success with audiences of all types. The story is as follows. A group of war-time buddies hold a reunion. The film is made up of the five main characters' biographies. The film-makers were young and only knew about the war from books and stories told by veterans, but nevertheless they created a realistic, accurate profile of the generation of courageous Soviet men and women, of whom nearly half died during the war. A nurse, a writer, a factory manager, a plumber and an accountant—these are the old front-line friends, who fought alongside other, likeable fellows who are close to millions of film-goers.

Many recent films have tried to attain the large-scale, synthetic form of a novel. One interesting example of this tendency is Georgian director David Rondeli's *My Friend Nodar*.

One rainy day, Nodar arrives in the big city having left his wife and his work behind, confident that he will 'conquer' life in the city, certain that he is made for an exciting life, above all, for art. But art only symbolizes an easy life for him, an elegant group of friends, and comfort, rewards that successful men sometimes acquire. Nodar automatically includes himself in the latter category. He is totally uncritical of himself and does not yet know that the moment will soon come when the futility of his individualism will become clear, when his self-confidence will be revealed as illusory, and his disdain for others, his inability to understand them, and his alienation from the very roots of life will become apparent.

*A Lovers' Romance* (directed by A. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky from a script by E. Grigoryev) is another film in this category, and it produced lively discussion at the time of its release. The director spoke about his film in this way: 'The story is about a girl and a young man. She works as a guide at an exhibition. He drives a trolley-bus. They are in love, very much in love. Then he is called-up into the army, in the marine corps. The girl waits for him. Then an accident happens; while saving

a man's life, the young man remains behind on a raft that has been cut loose, and he is swept out to sea. His family is notified of his death. The girl grieves and suffers enormously. But she has a friend, a good man, a professional hockey-player. He helps her in her grief. She marries him. Then it turns out that her boyfriend is not dead at all. And so they all find themselves part of a triangle. On the whole, a very banal conflict. Everyone suffers, yet no one is guilty.'

This is the plot, as such, and the director goes on to explain the film's inner meaning in these words: '...the idea is that love is a life-giving force. Without it a man dies. Without love man does not exist, and there is nothing human in him. We live as long as we have love in ourselves. Or the hope of love. Otherwise we are dead. Spiritually dead.' Love—a selfless, pure, lofty feeling—is expressed in many different ways in this film; 'things seem to reveal themselves anew, the simplest, most important things: one's country, mother, duty, honour, and sense of fraternity'.

Films for children and adolescents were particularly outstanding in the 1960s and 1970s. Soviet cinema has long, rich traditions in children's films. One of the first children's 'box-office hits' was *Red Devils*, directed by Ivan Peristiani in 1923. The film was enormously successful throughout the Soviet Union. Peristiani made many other films about the subsequent adventures of his young heroes.

Children's films established themselves solidly in the 1930s; the number of children's films grew, various genres were successfully adopted, and cinema became popular with young viewers. Some film-makers dedicated themselves entirely to this category of films. One of them was Aleksandr Rou, internationally famous for his fairytale films. His very first film, *The Magic Pike*, was made over forty years ago, and is still shown in cinemas today, like all of his many film-adaptations from Russian folklore: *Vasilissa the Beautiful*, *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, and others. Russian fairytales are full of humour, satire, and are always based on a firm

distinction between good and evil, a firm sense of justice, and moral and aesthetic values.

Other directors of children's films also came into prominence in the thirties: M. Barskaya (who directed *Torn Shoes* in 1933), A. Maslyukov and M. Maevskaya (*Karl Brunner, The Partisan's Daughter, Mitka Leluk*), V. Shneiderov (*Dzhulbars*) and others. Aleksandr Ptushko made his film *The New Gulliver* in the mid-thirties; later he made such well-known films as *The Stone Flower, Sadko, Ilya Muromets, Sampo, A Tale About Lost Time*, and *A Tale About Tsar Saltan*.

Byelorussian film-makers have shown a consistent interest in children's films. *Robinsons from Polesye* was very popular with children's audiences in the thirties. *A Little Girl Is Looking For a Father, Puschik Goes to Prague, The Partisan's Children*, and *The City of Craftsmen* continue to be popular today.

A great many possibilities discovered in older films are being successfully continued today. The half-forgotten traditions of Lev Kuleshov and his film *The Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks*, one of the first Soviet comedies, made in 1934, are being renewed. The recently released *A Dear Little Boy*, which developed these traditions, showed that the plot structure, acting principles, subtle sense of parody and satire in Kuleshov's film could all be applied to current international themes.

The Party resolutions mentioned above concerning the cinema stress that one of the cinema's important tasks is to participate in the individual's ideological and moral development.

A serious restructuring of film-making in this area led to a sharp increase in the release of films for young audiences, and helped to raise their artistic level. The best of these films do not adopt a condescending attitude towards their audience. Their success is determined by their noble ideas, fascinating plots, emotional appeal, and romantic touch. Children and

adolescents are attracted to heroes with open hearts, high ideals, people who perform daring feats and are capable of loyal friendship.

The theme of the formation of a child's personality in our country, a child who had lived all his life in an atmosphere of great accomplishments, respect for one's fellow-men, and an understanding of each individual's personal responsibility for everything that goes on in the world, was treated very capably in many films for this age group. Attention to the inner world of children and teenagers was particularly strong in R. Bykov's *Careful, Turtle!*, R. Viktorov's *Moscow-Cassiopeia*, and *Teenagers in the Universe*, as well as in A. Mitta's *Make a Funny Face*, E. Gavrilov's *Kysh and the Two-briefcases*, and I. Frez's *That Crazy Fellow from 5B*.

This last film, which was awarded the Soviet State Prize, shows the title character against a school background, with all the subtle touches that material of this type requires. The personality of the head of the first-graders is firmly founded on the tradition that grew out of Arkady Gaidar's story, *Timur and His Team*. This tradition means that the young hero tries to help others. Yet there is no hint of 'instructiveness' about any of this; the young character is taken straight from school life, even though his geneology may also derive from adult cinema. He is similar to many positive comedy heroes, of whom there were so many in the 1920s and 1930s. Comedies from this period—*Two Friends, a Model, and a Girlfriend*, *Girl With a Hatbox*, *Volga-Volga*, *A Girl with Character*, *The Tractor-Drivers*, and many others—although they were not especially made for younger audiences, were nonetheless great favourites with teenagers. Their heroes—active, jolly, and enthusiastic—contained socialist society's values. They were particularly attractive because of their spontaneity and because they were unaware of their own good points. *That Crazy Fellow from 5B* must be included in this group.

Children's films are nearly always humorous; one of their purposes, apart from those already mentioned, is to develop



their audience's sense of humor called 'the sixth sense' with good reason, a truly amazing ability. Humour is a form of intuition that makes it possible without reflection as such, to immediately notice any aesthetic imperfection or intellectual fault in one's surroundings or in oneself. It is a sort of heightened response to life, it gives our perception of reality, clarity, precision, and subtlety. In other words, comedy and humour are an outstanding means of educating moral, spiritual, and aesthetic qualities. In the early stages of their formative development, children especially love and appreciate humour in cinema, not only in comedies, but in films of any type.

Comedies, especially with memorable, realistic leading characters, are always very popular with young audiences. Audiences reacted to the comedy *Kysh and the Twobriefcases*, which depicts the inner world of first-graders, as an event in their personal lives.

Critics found a lot to question about the leading character in the film *Oh, That Nastya!* But everyone agreed that this little girl was lively, interesting, and memorable. The film won First Prize at the All-Union Film Festival in Tbilisi (Georgia), and scored a big success with older audiences as well which goes to prove again the old truth that the genuine artistic qualities of a work depend on how interesting, life-like, and memorable its characters are.

At first Nastya's teacher and classmates see her as a model of 'what not to do'. Her elder sister criticises her for 'putting on airs' in her composition: 'you couldn't write it like anyone else, in just an ordinary way'. Nastya does, in fact, like to fantasize, 'to make things up'. Some people do not understand this, but what we are seeing on the screen is the formation of a personality, of a person's inner world.

Some critics of the film did not notice its intention to satirise certain negative phenomena in school life, educative work, literature and art, problems that are a subject of public attention today.

The main characters in Soviet art always have had the ability

to perceive life's poetic aspect and its future development.

Nastya's fantasies, of course, are not terribly earth-shaking. The film stresses her ability to see the world in poetic terms. The polemical undercurrent in this situation is that the people around her, opposed to her, do not possess her ability, her poetic perception of life. Rather, they consider it a defect, preferring to see their own lack of poetry and prosaic factual approach as a virtue, a sign of being up-to-date.

Although the film was directed at younger viewers, it also has something to say to educators, teachers and artists. It is clearly opposed to films whose main characters only behave in a manner, without personalities of their own.

In fact, Nastya is more contemporary than her opponents. In today's changing world, a great deal is being reexamined in a more realistic light, and it is the people who claim to be modern who are in fact out-of-date. The technological revolution, which they themselves like to refer to, in determining our life-styles, habits, characters, encourages a significant widening of our intellectual abilities and interests; given an increase in our activities, it is especially needful to have an integrated perception of the world.

Poetry reflects man's perception of the world, all of his views on life on an aesthetic and emotional level. It is only natural that, given the complex social and economic transformations taking place today, as well as the technological revolution, there has been an increase in interest in poetry. A return to a poetic perception of things and the development of an integral emotional and intellectual perception of life is an essential need.

The true heroes of Soviet films, those characters that provided millions of film-goers with firm guidelines in life, were people with a sharply-defined, integrated perception of life. In comedy, where everything is heightened, characters in films like *Two Friends*, *a Model and a Girlfriend*, *Volga-Volga*, *A Girl with Character*, and *The Tractor-Drivers* created the new man with all his character traits—and very realistically,

despite the conventions of the form—a man with a sense of historical optimism, a romantic flair for performing feats, and a poetic striving to build new things. These films played an important role in the formative development of young viewers. Many of the best Soviet children's films were made in this same vein.

The recent comedy, *That Incredible Berendeev*, has its faults, but on the whole it successfully continues the tradition discussed above. Berendeev, a student at a technical training school, likes to fantasize, like Nastya. His fantasies are a bit different from her artistic fantasies, however, for he is technically-orientated, and his dreams—although they are also bold and poetic—are about penetrating the anti-world, creating a cross-country vehicle that never stops, etc. With time his fantasies will become more realistic and turn into something more concrete, scientific, and useful. The film suggests to its audience that they should not forget that fantasies represent a lofty spiritual and intellectual energy.

The leading characters in the comedies listed above do not claim to be 'positive heroes', but each one has found himself and has attained a certain integrity in his attitude towards life, this is almost a talent in itself, and therefore provides a point of reference for many people. The new society we are building requires that talent flourish broadly in all spheres of life. Each person is expected to show his abilities to the full extent, to develop their personalities in every way possible. This is in the best interests of people as individuals, and of society as a whole.

Rolan Bykov, director of *Dr. Pills-and-Powders-66*, *Careful, Turtle!*, *A Car, a Violin, and a Dog Named Spot*, and other films, represents another tendency in children's films today. Bykov relies on the 'montage of attractions' as the principle underlying his films, which include jokes, tricks, and circus turns. However, this emphasis on 'play' which, in the director's view, should draw young viewers into the film and help them better comprehend its content, has its drawbacks. There is

neither a clear, unified plot, nor clearly depicted characters, and these faults are very hard to compensate for in cinema. Nonetheless, many episodes and scenes constructed on these principles sometimes achieve very interesting results.

*Careful, Turtles!* was termed 'heroic' by critics. The feat it tells of is not particularly earth-shaking: the saving of a turtle's life. But the most important thing is the emotional sincerity with which this is done. This comedy is directed 'at the youngest viewers, as well as their elder brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, grandfathers and grandmothers' — in short, it is a family film. The film has many levels, something for each category of viewers. Adults can also learn something useful from it, along with their children and grandchildren. *Careful, Turtles!* is meant to focus the attention of parents and grandparents on the fact that children sometimes remain indifferent to the romanticism and poetry of life, to the values on which our society is founded.

This problem is a real one even for first-graders, the film-makers say. They also need spiritual nourishment, for otherwise their interests will become deformed and misdirected. This idea is amply illustrated in the film, which shows the destructive sides to some of children's pastimes.

Rolan Bykov's *A Car, a Violin, and a Dog Named Spot* has as its main characters perfectly 'ordinary' teenagers. True, one of them is a violonist and another likes fooling around with cars, but these characters have no particularly lofty strivings. The director stressed that his film does not aim to be profound, only amusing. There are other film-makers whose intentions are the same. Films with little content very often advertise themselves as 'amusements', a way to pass time pleasantly. However, such 'recreational' films are nonsense in terms of children's cinema; this sort of approach is typical of Western 'mass culture', which is offered to the viewer so that he can 'simply relax' and be diverted from his daily cares. However, young viewers do not accept 'vegetative' relaxation of this sort, they expect greater content, new information,

and real nourishment even from light-hearted films. They like comedies that demand a creative response from them. Moreover, must a work of art reject serious content and be superficial to be entertaining? The history of this genre shows that a lowered content level is detrimental to the comic nature of the film. Recreation is better provided by other forms of relaxation, for instance—as psychologists suggest—sports, active games of various types, etc.

However, Bykov's film *A Car, a Violin, and a Dog Named Spot* is extremely interesting as a satire made for children, as well as for their parents. Lately, unprejudiced films like this one have been made more frequently and are unquestionably educative in character. A recent film of this type is V. Kremnev's *Bottles*, which produced a great deal of discussion, as good comedies always do. Two teams of Pioneers, which are equal in nearly everything: in study, sports, collecting scrap metal, etc., are competing to see who can collect the most medicine bottles. As in vaudeville, the bottles acquire an incredible value in the eyes of the little boys and stir up a hullabaloo totally out of proportion to the real meaning of the event. The object of satire is shown very accurately, although of course, in accordance with the laws of the genre, it is exaggerated and shown in a magnified form. This object is formalism in schoolwork. In all the hullabaloo about collecting bottles, moral, ethical, and aesthetic standards are lost from view.

The film-makers succeeded in showing a whole range of formalistic methods in the context of school life with a sharp, lively sense of satire.

Satirical comedies for children are very necessary, as well as very easily comprehended. The children's satirical series 'Eralash' has had continuing success with its young viewers.

One of its stories goes like this: two schoolboys are trying to learn English from records. But they are so easily distracted that they hardly learn anything, while their pets—a starling and a dog prove more apt pupils.

Comedy films made for adult audiences present similar, though more complex problems. Of course, general audiences have nothing against 'light' films. The function of cinema as entertainment is indisputable, of course. But such a conception of cinema suggests little for creative practice. Many questions arise which need to be given more concrete form—above all, 'entertainment' itself needs to be defined. Essentially every work of art, even the most serious, fulfils this function in one way or another. On the other hand, films in which 'entertainment' is stressed above anything else often tend to be totally unentertaining. Heightening the entertainment function of cinema often is detrimental to art which, as we know from past experience, has always aimed at enriching and expanding the experience of the viewer, reader, or listener, at bringing him into contact with the highest spiritual, humanist, moral, and aesthetic values. Without this aim, the creation of a film, a work that is the product of a large group of talented artists from various fields of specialisation using the latest accomplishments of science and technology, would be like 'shooting down sparrows with a cannon'. Since the very beginning, all forms of Soviet art have consciously had significant and lofty functions.

In the early years after the Revolution, all sorts of leftist groups that had existed within the framework of decadent bourgeois art before the Revolution tried to advertise and affirm their principles. They particularly emphasized the entertainment and spectacle value of art, and this detracted from its content. This was especially true of the theatre, where 'the spectacular in theatre' reduced plays to 'a game', a light-hearted, purely entertaining show. There could be no full equivalent of this in cinema—the documental, photographic nature of cinema prevented this from happening—but nonetheless some directors did occasionally try to express a similar tendency with the help of inventive editing techniques, optical tricks, etc.

In Western art, which has actively, even aggressively at

times, rejected the traditions of realistic art, this over-stressing of entertainment value has also proved very harmful. Nearly all the innovations and experiments found in Western cinema today are not in the least original — they were nearly all tried in pre-revolutionary Russian art and in the early years of Soviet power, when some modernist trends, disguised as advanced, revolutionary trends (as is often the case today with leftist conceptions) tried to lead the way in creating a new art.

This emphasis on entertainment value in modern Western cinema is linked to the crisis in its ideological and artistic principles. Irony and humour in the hands of realistic artists were a means of profoundly depicting life, while for some of today's film-makers they are a means of disguising a film's total lack of content. It sometimes proves impossible for a director to maintain a serious tone throughout a film — which may begin as a tense drama and then gradually degenerates into a cheap, banal farce. There is also a tendency towards the inclusion of 'light' genres — farce, musicals, etc. — in traditional social dramas, for instance, from which we usually expect a serious discussion of life's most vital problems. There have also been attempts to justify this by showing, without any proof whatsoever, that a mixture of genres is always innovative and leads to artistic progress. Without wanting to reject new genres as such, we must point out that such 'generic cocktails' are always aimed at rejecting the 'traditional' in art and negating criteria that have always acted as guidelines in realistic art.

Soviet film-makers today do not, of course, avoid traditionally entertaining genres, but they keep in mind that an entertaining film does not have to be lacking in content or frivolous.

Georgy Danelia's recent films have provided outstanding examples of this truth. His *Afonya* was fantastically successful. It is a comedy, but it stands out from other comic films, by its seriousness, topicality, and the urgent problems it discusses. The appearance of such comedies has been an



important feature in recent Soviet cinema. Before this, films more purely entertainment-orientated, like *Feithful Friends*, with its corny humour, dominated the comic genre. Mikhail Kalatozov's skilful direction and a melodic musical score partially saved the situation, but films of this type are not very highly valued today. Inoffensive comedies may sometimes enjoy some success with audiences—sometimes even great success, like Leonid Gaidai's *Ivan Vassilievich Changes His Profession, It Can't Be!* etc., but to waste comic and professional skill on such trifles is absurd, and this is particularly true today. Danelia's *Afonya* is a stern reproach to such light-hearted entertainments.

*Afonya* deals with many of life's problems. One of these is the so-called 'anti-culture'. The film does not just gently poke fun, as is only too often the case, but a serious, unprejudiced discussion between the artist and his audience about this and other vital questions that affect everyone today. As a comedy, too, the film was excellent in every respect. Many critics regard it as one of Danelia's best films to date, and these include his previous successes *I Walk Through Moscow* (1964), *Don't Grieve* (1969). The film is also outstanding for its brilliant acting performances; Leonid Kuravlyov, who performs in the title role, is an excellent representative of the acting style associated with Vassily Shukshin.

One of Danelia's later comedies, *Mimino* (1977), was also highly praised.

The latter half of the 1960s was characterised by its treatment of larger, more serious themes than the preceding period, which, for cinema, as well as the other arts, was a transitional period marked by the treatment of social and political problems.

The struggle for peace was the subject of a number of political films, a genre that is now very popular. *Off-Season* and *Committee of the Nineteen*, both directed by Savva Kulish adopt the form of an adventure story to tell about nazi war criminals, attempts to continue their research into bacteriological warfare methods after the end of the war. *Committee*

*of the Nineteen* (script by S. Mikhalkov and A. Shlepyanov) tells about the tense struggle for an international agreement to ban nuclear weapons, struggle that the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have always consistently maintained, as they do today. This film reminds the audience again and again of fascism's crimes and the direct link that exists between nazi big-wigs and the neo-fascist resurgence today.

*Black Sun*, directed and scripted by Aleksei Speshnev, and produced at Byelorussiafilm Studios, is based on a real happening in an African country, although no documents are cited, nor is the real prototype behind the chief character named. The film focuses attention on the personality of this African leader, poet, and publicist, a man of outstanding inner qualities, although not without contradictions. The majority of the cast is made up of African actors.

*That Sweet Word 'Freedom'*, directed by Lithuanian director Vitautas Žalakevičius from a script by Valentin Ezhov, takes us to a country in Latin America. The film's heroes risk their lives every minute as they tunnel under the fortress to save the Democratic Senators inside. This plot, which fits naturally into the adventure genre, is realistically introduced into the surroundings and atmosphere of modern life in a capitalist city. Among the characters are party leaders, party functionaries, extremists and moderates. And ordinary people, who earn their freedom through their own heroism, suffering, and long patience. The film-makers' style is a sociological approach to the events and characters, and includes certain elements of political reporting. Each character is socially and demographically described at his first appearance on the screen.

Lately a large number of films have appeared on the subject of the peace struggle, which is treated within the framework of the political film, among them a number of co-productions between Soviet and foreign film companies.

The sixtieth anniversary of the October Revolution was marked by an increase in films on historical and revolutionary themes. Many important films had been

made about the struggle for Soviet power in preceding years.

Among the successes we should mention *The First Teacher* (from a story by the noted Kirghiz writer, Chinghiz Aitmatov, directed by Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky), which told a severe and dramatic story of the struggle for a new life in a Kirghiz village. B. Beishenaliev, who acted the title role, convincingly conveyed the world of man with great faith in the future, ready to perform a self-sacrificing feat for this future. *The Twenty-Six Baku Commissars* (directed by Azhdar Ibragimov) acquaints the audience with the tragic events in Azerbaijan in 1918, when enemies of the October Revolution and foreign interventionists executed the commissars of Baku Commune by a firing squad. A screen adaptation of A. Serafimovich's famous novel *The Iron Flood* directed by Efim Dzigan was a notable event in cinema during this period.

A whole series of heroic-adventure films told of the struggle to establish Soviet power. The most successful of these were *No Password Needed*, *The Ataman's End*, *White Sun of the Desert*, *The Man From the Other Side*, *White Bird with Black Markings*, *Mortal Enemy*, *Dauria*, and *The End of the Lyubavins*.

It was the Soviet cinema that produced the historical-revolutionary genre as such. It came into being, as the Bulgarian critic, Nedelcho Milchev wrote, 'not as a result of decisions made in a quiet study, but out of the real necessity to interpret and re-interpret past revolutionary experience, and from bold experiments carried out during the building of socialist society.' The best films on this theme are distinguished by their depth of historical analysis, their depiction of the poetry and romance of great accomplishments, and their heroic figures.

The best Soviet historical-revolutionary films represent new and important ideological and artistic landmarks. These films are consistent in adhering to documental principles. The film-makers display a broad grasp of the social and historical background and present all the details of complex, contradictory situations. They realise that Soviet audiences generally have a good knowledge of the historical background,

have studied many different sources, and do not expect films to simply confirm what they already know, but to present them with new information. Recent films that show this trend in the historical-revolutionary genre include the major biographical film, *Nikolai Bauman*, the Uzbek film, *Horsemen of the Revolution*, the Ukrainian film, *How the Steel Was Tempered*, and many other important films made at studios across the country. Apart from the virtues already mentioned, their film-makers made excellent use of cinematic possibilities for conveying the atmosphere of the time, and the poetry and romance of the Revolution.

However, a number of recent films that treated themes in this category have met with a qualified response from critics, who now examine them in a more demanding light and have found them wanting in comparison with the classics in this genre. They point that some of these films have a rather musty, museum-like feel about their reconstruction of the past; the contemporary aspect of the events depicted is often not clarified sufficiently.

It has been suggested that new methods are needed today to treat themes in this category. Veteran Ukrainian director Timofei Levchuk has expressed it thus: 'Sometimes script-writers and directors are too light-hearted in their attitude towards the making of an historical-revolutionary film. Yet his is a sacred task—an heroic, popular epos; it should come into being according to the laws of epic, popular art.' It has always been the case that a work of monumental art—and the historical-revolutionary film belongs to this category because of its ideological and artistic breadth—came into being as a result of a great deal of creative effort. A dictatorial direction would be totally unsuited to this genre. Historical-revolutionary films evidently require an especially high level of collective creative activity. The best Soviet films in this genre were made this way. *Lenin in October* and *Lenin in 1918* were made with the direct participation of old Bolsheviks and public and governmental figures.

Of course, we should remember that we are separated from the Soviet socialist revolution's history and pre-history by a large span of time, and today, unlike the 1930s when many of our classics on historical-revolutionary themes were made, there are very few direct participants or eye-witnesses of the Revolution left among Soviet film-makers, even among the older generation. Naturally, this is not the decisive factor, yet the cinema—more than any other art-form—is drawn towards documental sources and needs a detailed audio and visual authenticity on the screen.

It is only natural that in some instances this has made work on historical-revolutionary films much more difficult.

The 1920s and 1930s, during which the Soviet people showed great heroism and enthusiasm in their labour, as well as being a period during which the country underwent many dramatic, complex conflicts arising from the fact that the Soviet Union was the first to strike out on a new historical path to the future, is now history for us. The tense years of the first five-year plans, when the country was faced with the task of reconstructing its economy, creating anew many branches of modern industry, and closing the gap between the Soviet Union and the technologically developed capitalist countries in an incredibly short span of time, with the threat of war, hanging over the country as well, have not yet been sufficiently shown on the screen. This period, which represented the militant, romantic, difficult youth of those people who lived in the Revolution, was concealed behind other themes for many years (which was only natural); even today Soviet films rarely touch on this theme, although it has been included in film-makers' plans in recent years. Among the very few films that do exist we should mention *Time, March On!*, directed by Mikhail Schweitzer from a novel of the same name by Valentin Kataev. The film-script was written in the very wake of the events depicted, not from memoirs, and this is why it contains a great many direct observations and significant

details about time and place that may not seem terribly important in terms of history, but in terms of cinema are very valuable for creating atmosphere. The film does not make an obvious attempt to be entertaining; it tells of the life of cement-workers on one of the country's new construction sites. However, despite its rather prosaic sequence of events, audiences always watch this two-part film with unflagging interest. This is probably because it brings back memories of the audience's youth, and they are always affected by such memories, no matter what they may be. Or may be it is because they are caught up in the rhythm of the narrative—dynamic and fast-moving, like the work itself. However, the thoughtful, serious viewer—and there are many such viewers today—will be drawn into the film by its deeply philosophical, social-psychological aspect. The film's main idea is a reflection on the profound spiritual and moral nature of social emulation. This emulation develops genuinely humane values in the new man, who has been formed by the new social structure: a collectivist spirit, which does not fetter man's individuality but, on the contrary, creates the conditions for the development of his creative potential, for the overcoming of that brand of individualism which in fact deprives man of his personality and turns him into just a cog in the consumer society. Reflections on the nature of socialist emulation, which has replaced competition (which only enslaves man) in the development of mankind, occupy pride of place in *Time, March On!* We see before us on the screen the realisation of the dreams, visions, and conceptions of a whole series of great thinkers in the past, and of the best traditions in the people's working and spiritual culture. The film-makers stress—or more correctly, they reflect what in fact was the case—the multi-national nature of the group of cement-workers, solidly united by their lofty values. This is also a practical example of the internationalist principle—one of the most vital in the life of modern mankind.

In the 1960s and 1970s Soviet film-makers made a great number of screen adaptations of Russian, Soviet, and foreign

literary classics; these adaptations had great significance for the future development of cinema.

Screen adaptations represent a special category of cinema, not just a genre or range of themes. In adapting works for the screen, the cinema frequently becomes a populariser of works from other art-forms, above all literary and stage classics, and is also sometimes a means of documenting Soviet and foreign stage productions (filmed versions of operas, ballets, plays, concerts, etc).

The best Soviet screen adaptations are faithful to their sources, while 'up-dating' and various types of 'free' handling of themes from the classics which attempt less to convey the artistic world of the original author than to become a co-author on an equal footing, are doomed to failure, as has been shown in practice.

The need to be especially careful in treating the classical heritage derives from certain features of the classics themselves—for they represent an outstanding achievement in the culture of an era now past that has permanent value in the lives of succeeding generations. The permanent value of the classics has been tried and tested by time, they have found their place in the treasure-house of the people's culture.

Interpretations of the classics and the raising of standards for screen adaptations had major significance for cinema itself in that it assisted in working out new guidelines and criteria for realistic art. The slogan 'learning from the classics', which has so often been sounded in the history of Soviet cinema, now meant a more organic use of our artistic heritage.

The four-part screen adaptation of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* directed by Sergei Bondarchuk was a major event in Soviet cinema. This film enjoyed enormous success both within the Soviet Union and abroad. Critics pointed out the many outstanding qualities in this grandiose production which recreated Russian life in the early nineteenth century with a high level of accuracy, showing the famous military commanders and state figures, the heroic pages in the War of 1812 in which the



Russian people defeated Napoleon's armies. The wide format allowed battle scenes to be impressively reconstructed and the characters' inner world and psychological nuances to be depicted, which made them particularly true-to-life. Critics especially praised beginning actress Lyudmila Savelyeva in the role of Natasha Rostova and Sergei Bondarchuk's performance as Pierre Bezukhov.

Another outstanding virtue of this epic was the fact that although the director was faithful to the literary original with its criticism of 'high society's' hypocrisy and other vices, he also had a positive attitude towards the past, which was new for the cinema. In this sense, *War and Peace* was a polemic against the vulgar sociological conceptions that had been typical of film in the 1920s, but which lingered for a long time and hindered the development of Soviet cinema.

The screen version of Dostoevsky's *The Karamazov Brothers* was another major cinematic event. This three-part film was the last to be made by talented director Ivan Pyriev. As in all his films, the acting performances are splendid—Mikhail Ulyanov took the role of Dmitry Karamazov, Kirill Lavrov acted Ivan Karamazov, Andrei Myagkov performed the role of Alyosha Karamazov, and Valentin Nikulin was Smerdyakov. In the last years of his life, Pyriev accomplished a great deal in bringing Dostoevsky's works to the screen.

Benefiting from its contact with the classics, cinema perfected its principles of realistically reflecting life and its methods for conveying man's profound psychological experience and inner world.

Other screen adaptations were also of major importance: *Crime and Punishment* (from Dostoevsky's novel, directed by Lev Kulidzhanov), *Hamlet* and *King Lear* (directed by Grigori Kozintsev), *Resurrection* (from L. Tolstoy's novel, directed by M. Schweitzer), and *A Nest of the Gentry* (Turgenev's novel) and *Uncle Vanya* (Chekhov's play), both directed by Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky.

The 1960s and 1970s also saw the appearance of a number

of films that disclosed the inner world of great Russian artists in an interesting and distinctive way: *Tchaikovsky* (directed by Igor Talankin), *A Subject for a Short Story* (about Chekhov, directed by Sergei Yutkevich), and *Andrei Rublyov* (directed by Andrei Tarkovsky).

The process by which realistic traditions were further absorbed and developed showed the cinema's ever-increasing respect for literary sources, their style, subject and characters. The films listed above and others like them showed an ever-growing depth and subtlety in their depiction of life, human thoughts and feelings.

The further intensification of the realistic method demands a heightened interest in man and all the manifestations of his inner world; it became absolutely necessary to overcome an illustrative, blinkered approach in characterisation. The actor is unquestionably acquiring new significance in Soviet cinema today. A whole new gallery of performers has appeared, each with his or her own creative method.

The actress Lyudmila Chursina has been particularly good in a number of recent screen adaptations. Her characters are distinctive and important although socially they could be termed 'ordinary people'. The Cossack girl in *A Story of the Don* (from a work by Mikhail Sholokhov) and the 'very ordinary' revolutionary girl, Virineya, in the film of the same name adapted from a novel by Lydia Seifullina, a Soviet classic. We should add the role of the collective farm girl, Marfa, in *The Little Crane*, a girl who remained faithful to the memory of her husband killed in the war. Lyudmila Chursina defines her roles this way: 'woman and love'. Her particularly outstanding quality is her ability to convey her characters' feelings with a subtle, totally modern sense of psychological nuancing. Unfortunately, many screen actors, even the most famous, often resort to cinematic clichés, artificial gestures and intonations in their performances. They often seem to think it sufficient to simply 'depict' some given relationship between characters, for instance, love. Audiences may sometimes accept whatever

they are shown. But art has nothing to do with this type of acting, for psychological and artistic truth are inevitably distorted by such bad habits on the part of actors.

Modern audiences reject imitations of art and the use of artistic methods for speculative purposes, something that we often encounter in films by directors whose ideas are very far from genuine progress.

Soviet cinema did not emerge from a vacuum. It was able to affirm itself, develop, and become the most important of all the arts—in Lenin's words—only because it absorbed and reworked achievements from other art-forms. The problems of continuity was always a vital one for Soviet artists within the frameworks of artistic methods, principles, and devices. This question is still an important one today. As we mentioned above, the development of Soviet cinema, like that of other arts, was significantly hindered in the 1920s by the influence of various leftist conceptions which rejected the heritage of realistic art, our national classics, and the traditions of the people's artistic culture. This nihilism had gone so far that continuity in art would soon have been totally disrupted. Claiming to be the leaders of the new art, these theoreticians often had a very negative influence on creative practice. The theoretical basis for their mistaken ideas was a crudely sociological approach to artistic phenomena.

Ignoring the continuity in cultural development led to attempts to build a new art on new principles which were invented by these theoreticians of various modernistic trends. Lenin always stressed the futility of such attempts and pointed out the need for continuity in artistic and cultural questions. Party critics in the 1920s tried very hard to support realism and maintain popular spirit in cinema. Errors in certain films were overcome, but over-simplifications and crudely sociological views on art continued to some extent in the 1930s and the post-war years, particularly the illustrative quality of some films. Films often dealt with one pre-conceived idea or another, and as a result their plots were totally artificial, as

was their range of characters, rather than coming about as a result of the artist's own direct observations of life.

Today, too, we sometimes encounter this illustrative approach in cinema. Soviet film-makers regard this as a serious problem, one that must be overcome. The fact that Western cinema today has made this illustrative approach into a permanent feature of its work, does not lessen this problem's importance. It is now standard in the West for films, although skilfully disguised and professionally done, to be illustrations of various fashionable philosophies—Freudianism, Neo-Freudianism, existentialism, 'alienation', 'lack of communication' or whatever else. Directors of these films even see their purpose as popularising these theories. Apart from the fact that these films spread narrow, superficial conceptions of life, the limitations they impose on the artist contradict the principles of realistic art which, as we know, has not lost its independence in the social struggle, in its most progressive manifestations, but has used all the powerful means at its disposal, reflecting life and affirming true spiritual values in this struggle.

The rejection of the traditional, specific methods of artistic cognition of reality in Western art has various underlying reasons, especially the demands of official criticism based on an aesthetic reflecting the deep crisis in bourgeois philosophy, ideology and culture. The result are films addressed either to an intellectual *Jélite*, illustrating whatever philosophical ideas may be current at the time, or films intended for the mass public, films created outside the traditions of realistic art and calculated to make a sensational effect on the audience through crude naturalism. The theoreticians of 'mass culture' are trying to direct culture along these lines. Given such a situation, neither 'mass culture' nor art for an *Jélite* can even attempt to reflect life's or aesthetic values. The futility of this trend is obvious.

The grounds for such art were prepared by decadent, modernist criticism, art history and philosophy, which undercut

the basic principles of art and realistic culture that draws its roots from the people declaring that standards of beauty and morality are out-moded and discrediting 'common-sense', 'everyday awareness', 'a sense of reality', spiritual values, and what Eisenstein termed the audience's 'organic', immediate perception. No cardboard characters intended to illustrate some abstract, rationalist idea can ever give such a perception, but a well-rounded reflection of living reality.

Advocates of the 'consumer society' who claim that the art described above is 'true modern art' are, in fact, deforming its nature, aiming to alienate man from any understanding of reality and deprive him of any firm standards for objectively analysing and evaluating reality.

Given a situation in which art of this type dominates, progressive artists have a very difficult task. Whenever it is possible to overcome obstacles of a 'non-aesthetic character' and raise social and political problems in their works, they are forced to take into account the aesthetic standards of the dominant artistic system. This accounts for their use of naturalism and an illustrative approach to their subject, inasmuch as the audience's perceptions have been deformed by the dominant film form.

Western art has had a particularly negative influence on cinema in the developing countries. In some of these countries, traditions of realistic art that might have been able to offset 'non-traditional' Western art, simply have not arisen. In other developing countries an opposition of this sort is extremely weak because the forces involved are so unequal. Western films (above all, American films) occupy up to ninety per cent of cinema screens in certain countries. The development of a national cinema is actively opposed by leftist theories of all sorts which try to direct young cinema along 'non-traditional' paths, rejecting the principles of realistic art.

Soviet cinema is developing and functioning in fundamentally different conditions, and this determines the all-

important principles that guide Soviet film-makers in everything, even problems in cinematic language. The crudely sociological conceptions that turned film-makers in the 1920s and 1930s towards illustrativeness, towards a rejection of the specific methods of artistic creation and the traditions of realistic art were, of course, incompatible with the principles of loyalty to the ideals of the people on which socialist realism is based. This principle, that is, the aspect of it that affects a work's artistic form, demands continuity in the people's artistic culture. This was repeatedly emphasised by Lenin.

Soviet cinema today is characterised by its consistent affirmation of the popular quality of art in the Leninist understanding of this concept, by the consolidation and further development of the principles of realistic art in today's developed socialist society. The dominant theme of socialist humanism in Soviet films today is being worked out in new depth and consistency. This shows the fundamental difference between Western art and Soviet realism. Nearly all critics in the West today recognise the profound crisis to which bourgeois humanism has led. Emphasising individualism as such and neglecting the question of man's relation to man and society, this world-view has shown its bankruptcy and degenerated into egoistic individualism. Paradoxical though it may seem, in individualist art the individual himself, despite all his desperate attempts to affirm himself, is smothered; he becomes just a cog in the wheel in anonymous consumer society. It is common today to speak of the 'dehumanising' of man in Western art, his reduction to a one-dimensional scheme, and the elimination of all that is spiritual in him. The conception of man has always been decisive in art at every stage of its history, and in the final analysis it has determined the entire structure of an art work right down to its formal features. Western art theoreticians today are proclaiming a 'rational' approach to the depiction of reality, along with the rejection of 'traditional' methods in art, methods that belong

to classical realism, and the 'emotional' colouring that always determined the specific means of cognition of reality through art.

Socialist realism, on the other hand, directs the artist towards the depiction of man as his major task, in light of the highest spiritual, moral, and aesthetic values, towards the revelation of 'human in man', as Dostoevsky expressed it. This is the only way that this theme, which has major importance for socialist realist art and all contemporary art, can be revealed: man in his relation to the people and history. This theme affirms itself in the dispute with modernist, individualist art and with its lingering influence, which has sometimes hindered genuine creative progress in the cinema of certain socialist countries.

Soviet cinema of the 1960s and 1970s has consolidated the principles of reflecting reality, has made it possible for art and life to draw closer together, and for film-makers to show a greater interest in life's most vital problems. Illustrative elements that were to some extent typical of films in the 1960s when archaic stylistic methods were being overcome and new artistic principles that were more appropriate to a deeper understanding of the socialist realist method were being mastered are now being eliminated. An important landmark here was the film *The Chairman* (1964, script by Yuri Nagibin, directed by Aleksei Saltykov), which dealt with life in a Soviet village in the first years after the war. The hero of this film was collective farm chairman Yegor Trubnikov, played by Mikhail Ulyanov. The main point is not that the main character is depicted in all his psychological complexity, even though this gives us a better idea of the man, but something else altogether: Trubnikov's world-view, his spiritual being, for it is these factors that give this character his monumentality and make him a living, recognizable character. It is a major figure, capable of acting not only energetically and skilfully in the complex post-war situation in the village, but also uncompromisingly, capable of defending



his principles in complex conflict situations and performing his civil and human duty.

Some critics regarded the main hero's energetic activity to be too overwhelming, but life created dramatic situations without any alternative for him. Capitulation would have been the only other possible solution.

*The Chairman* affirmed a more consistent application of realistic principles in its acting methods. The ability to create psychological and every-day touches in a character is very important in acting. However, not all such skilfully depicted characters always contain life's truth. The leading actors in *The Chairman*, above all, Mikhail Ulyanov, reveal the basis for their characters' personalities. Mikhail Ulyanov won the Lenin Prize for his performance as Yegor Trubnikov.

Director Gleb Panfilov's films *No Ford in the Fire*, *The Beginning*, and *I Would Like to Speak...* were very important in reinforcing cinema's realistic reflection of life during these years.

Veteran dramatist Evgeni Gabrilovich helped write the scripts for the first two films. He relates the subject of *No Ford in the Fire* this way: 'It tells the story of a Communist Youth League girl who is taken prisoner by the White Guards and is executed by them. This girl is a nurse's aid in a hospital train that travels back and forth from the front. She was also an artist.' Basically, this was a film about one person, who totally occupies the screen-time. The important thing is that the story was a real one, taken from life itself, and the heroine is depicted fully, as an individual. She did not fulfil just a functional role in the film, as is often the case in dogmatic treatments of similar themes, not just as a nurse's aid, a young Communist, a fighter, but also as an artist, although this really had very little to do with the rest of it. But these many facets make up her life-like character, her human integrity.

What the director, script-writer, and main actress, Inna Churikova, found in this film was then continued, after a

fashion, in their next film, *The Beginning*. Gabrilovich describes its content thus: 'We decided to write a very simple story about a factory girl, Pasha Stroganova, who falls in love with a fellow and comes to believe that he is her husband and that she now has a family. But the fellow himself thinks differently, as does his real wife. That's the whole of the story.'

'Our task was to show the complexity and breadth, the world beneath the surface of a simple story like this. There were two voices: one from the surface, so to speak, and one from within.

'In order to hear this second voice we interspersed excerpts from the story of Joan of Arc into Pasha Stroganova's story. Both voices are heard in parallel fashion—diverging and drawing together again. Separating and merging.

'This was introduced naturally into the plot because our Pasha—an actress in the factory's amateur theatricals—is chosen to play the role of Joan.

'The meeting point between Pasha's life and Joan's life provided a spark that gave rise to more complex means of showing changes taking place within her. What was simple becomes large-scale.'

The performance by Inna Churikova in the main role was decisive in carrying out this idea. She was able to convey her character's three-dimensional nature, and to reveal the fascinating, rich inner world of 'an ordinary person'. We use parentheses here because it is totally impossible, of course, to divide people into 'ordinary' or 'extra-ordinary', when we are speaking of their human qualities. It is just as unacceptable to treat this 'ordinary' man in realistic art in a sentimental way, as melodramas do. Sentimental melodrama has always been alien to Soviet cinema. However, some recent films—as if in imitation of poor specimen of the past—treat the 'ordinary' man as a 'little man', with all the best intentions in the world perhaps, but much too sentimentally (this is true of certain films by that talented comedy director, Eldar Ryazanov, from scripts by Emil Braginsky). *The Beginning*

is very important in this respect as a 'polemic' of sorts against this treatment of 'ordinary' people.

The latest film by Panfilov with actress Inna Churikova, *I Would Like to Speak...* is also focused on one central figure, and is an interesting attempt to depict a person on many different levels on the screen. This film also contains brilliant performance in supporting roles by Vassily Shukshin and Nikolai Gubenko. However, stage centre is occupied by the main female figure, played by Inna Churikova. True, *I Would Like to Speak* is less a one-woman film than was *The Beginning*. The heroine is the mayor of a small town, and is shown in her leisure time (she an expert sharp-shooter), in her family circle, and experiencing a major tragedy—the death of her son. However, this time, the director has not found the underlying world-view or poetic principle that moves her to act as she does; the film is more like a sketch, an outline for a major work in the future.

The influence of Vassily Shukshin on Soviet films has been very noticeable over the last ten years or more. In his short lifetime he showed himself to be a talented film actor, script-writer, short-story writer, and film director. His last acting appearance was a small role in *They Fought For Their Country* (from the novel by Mikhail Sholokhov, directed by Sergei Bondarchuk). He directed the films, *Strange People*, *Higgledy-Piggledy*, *The Red Snow-Ball Tree*, and others. Shukshin is very popular with Soviet cinema audiences: in the few days after his death, more than one hundred and sixty thousand letters were received at his home expressing the grief of people who had been shaken by his untimely death. His grave in Moscow's Novodevichy Cemetery is always covered with snow-ball tree flowers and leaves.

*The Red Snow-Ball Tree* was directed by Shukshin from one of his own stories. He also played the main role, former convict Yegor Prokudin, who has made a fresh start in life. After his release from prison, he meets a good woman, they fall in love, and he begins to work like an honest man, but this

new life proves a very short one. The theme of moral duty and conscience runs through all of Shukshin's work.

As critics observed, *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* tells the seemingly personal story of a man who has lost his way, and its entire construction affirms the responsiveness and nobility of people who are ready to help a man make a new start. Shukshin spoke thus of this character, the apparently embittered convict Yegor Prokudin: 'What could touch his heart? Only an encounter with kindness and goodness. A human response from another person.'

Audiences praised the film's humanist idea, its theme of the great power of love, which is capable of helping a man find his place in life in even the most dramatic, tragic circumstances.

Shukshin's enormous talent was instrumental in making his film such a hit with audiences. The 'traditional' methods of artistic cognition of life that Shukshin used so consistently demand a modern theoretical interpretation at our new stage of knowledge about art. Shukshin's use of 'non-typical', marginal areas of life, conflicts, and circumstances raised doubts in some critics' minds. Despite general acclaim, the film was also criticised. Some reviewers noted the contradiction between the film's realistic virtues and its weaknesses in the educative sense, especially with regard to the film's end and the central figure himself. But it is only natural that major works of art contain certain contradictions. Their correct resolution supposes the mass media's active participation in a broad discussion of the film in order to complete the post-communicative process between the film and the audience. *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* received wide coverage in newspapers and magazines and resulted in the organisation of conferences and discussions for viewers. This is the way cinema works today. New, different situations must appear in films from time to time in order to freshen the audience's perceptions. Simplification or lack of truthfulness about life is totally alien to socialist realist art.

Major art requires major efforts from viewers, readers, and listeners. A genuine work of art, apart from its other good points, is also important in that it produces an active reaction from audience—unlike second-or-third-rate films—and draws the viewer into a broad discussion of the problems it raises, problems that are important for everyone. This illustrates the saying: 'A good film needs a good audience.' A work with outstanding ideas and artistic qualities creates an intelligent, competent viewer and stirs up his best abilities which, as experience shows, every viewer has. Stereotyped perceptions, which usually limit viewers' understanding of the content of a work of art, are brushed aside in such cases. Of course, these stereotyped perceptions have their usefulness when applied to the ordinary phenomena of everyday life, but require major correctives when applied to an audience's perceptions of work of art. It is especially appropriate to speak of stereotyped perceptions with regard to 'mass culture'.

The ideas behind *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* are much deeper than sober, realistically-minded suggestions for rehabilitating criminals. Plot-wise these ideas are linked with the chief character. At the very end we hear excerpts from his letters being read out—letters evidently written at moments of heightened insight, moments which occur in the lives of people with such complex fates. However, on the whole ideas are the author's own. He is not pondering how to struggle more efficiently against crime, but reflecting on life in general, about the lofty spiritual values that underlie a man's life, among them Shukshin's own idea about a man's civil activity and his moral responsibility for everything that goes on around him.

Current Soviet cinema is characterised by an insurge of young talent. This is typical of every studios in the country today. Films directed by Larissa Shepitko always produce great interest among audiences and professional cinema workers. Her *The Ascension* forcefully disclosed the reserves of inner energy that underlie patriotic feats, 'the human in man'. It was awarded many international film prizes.

The actor Nikolai Gubenko moved into film directing with a great deal of interesting experience in cinema behind him. Audiences warmly approved his *Wounded Birds*, which told of the first post-war years when the Soviet people heroically overcame the war's after-effects. Two young, talented directors, T. Okeev (*The Red Apple*) and B. Shamshiev (*The White Steamer*), moved into prominence at the Kirghiz Film Studios. Popular Ukrainian screen actor Leonid Bykov also turned to directing with noted success. His films have a distinctively individual style of their own, and are reminiscent in some ways of Shukshin's work. This similarity is due to the fact that both these directors consistently elaborated a manner of depicting life aimed at the cognition and assimilation of reality. Art of this sort does not reject emotion, as Western art today does, nor does it seek to 'rationalise' the creative process, which directors lacking any real creative temperament do, making their work 'illustrative', no matter how technically superb it may be.

Leonid Bykov's style is highly emotional; this enables him not only to show his heroes' outward behaviour and character, but also, inasmuch as he 'identifies' with his main characters, to disclose what is most important in them, their inner world, and the moral, aesthetic, and spiritual criteria that guide their lives.

Some writers who fought in the Second World War believe, and with good reason, that only people who have personal experience of the front lines are able to depict it. The most important thing is not a mass of external details that could be learned from documents, difficult though this may be. It is more difficult to understand and feel the emotional atmosphere of the time and place, and to reproduce the thoughts and feelings of people at that time. However, a director who is able to identify with his characters can do this. Film critics, as well as audiences, acclaimed Leonid Bykov's *Only Old Timers Go to Fight*, which brought episodes in the war to life in an unusually bold and poetic way. The director also

performs in one of the main roles, although he himself only knows about war 'at second-hand'; nonetheless, he recreated the precise appearance of the time as well as the atmosphere of those years, and the soldiers' thoughts and feelings. The film was bold and innovative in many respects. Songs, music, and humour are included in this heroic, dramatic narrative — and not just to liven up the story, or to decorate it. Songs and poems were a favourite art-form during the war and, strange though it may seem, this is often forgotten when this time is recreated on the screen. *Only Old Timers Go to Fight* followed these half-forgotten tracks into the very heart of the war, showed its atmosphere from the inside and acquainted us with people on a directly emotional basis. New sides to those front-line soldiers were shown, sides that had scarcely been explored until then, although they were real and had existed. Leonid Bykov stressed this in all his films and in his next one, *One Soldier, Two Soldiers... (Aty-Baty...)*. His characters are young, yet mature and highly moral. This is reflected in their whole being, even their manner of speaking and moving. Their harsh experiences not only have failed to 'harden them', as reviews use to say, but in fact have heightened their sense of morality.

Bykov's *One Soldier, Two Soldiers... (Aty-Baty...)* deals with continuity between generations in a genre unusual for such a theme: heroic comedy. The film creates inner links between two different periods of time.

It is a spring day in 1944 and soldiers in an anti-tank platoon are being killed while driving back an enemy attack. Thirty years later their families gather on the outskirts of this same village. The different people gathered around their common grave are joined by a sense of spiritual unity during these brief moments, and their children—who are older than their fathers—are examining themselves severely. Their memories bring to life a picture of this battle and shows us what kind of men these soldiers were. They are portrayed laconically, but two or three small details are enough to create



a vivid picture. This trait in Bykov's directing style was clearly seen in his previous film. Bykov is able to find significant details which might at first seem secondary, but which bring a character to life, showing us various sides to his personality, his inner self, and all his past life.

The Second World War as it is treated in Soviet films is about the struggle for peace, for true 'human in man', against his loss of identity and heroism, his 'dehumanisation'. This is why this theme has been a permanent and significant one in the Soviet repertoire. The scope and depth with which life's truth is conveyed in cinema are established by these films. The late 1960s saw the appearance of *Liberation*—an epic film of great grandeur encompassing decisive events in the latter part of the war. Its distinctive sequel, *Soldiers of Freedom*, captured even more fully the historical and international importance of the defeat of fascism.

The heroism of the Second World War was successfully conveyed in films of many different genres. Among recent films we might mention *The Hot Snow*, *The Dawns Are Quiet Here...* and *Kovpak*. Sergei Bondarchuk's screen version of Mikhail Sholokhov's *They Fought For Their Country* was deeply realistic, almost documental in style, showed a vivid interest in the details of life at the front, and was able to reveal the outstanding qualities that Soviet soldiers showed in the early difficult months of the war.

Both the director and his actors understood the stylistic subtleties of the literary original—a novel of the same name by Mikhail Sholokhov. The writer saw and interpreted life in broad categories, he measures people against high standards, and deals with highly dramatic, tragic situations. His eye also keenly grasps tiny details, comic touches that life always contains, seemingly not very important details, but very perceptive ones that focus a whole chain of thoughts, feelings, and associations. Every performance in *They Fought for Their Country* contains interesting discoveries, not just the

usual stereotypes, but details showing a profound understanding of life and the nature of art. Vassily Shukshin was particularly outstanding in his role in this film, his last role. His acting style fully corresponds to Sholokhov's own realistic style. Shukshin's character is full of life even in situations that, logically speaking, are hopeless. His natural sense of bravado shows his disdain for circumstances, his freedom from their tragic configuration. This 'ordinary' man has none of that simple-mindedness that writers often give characters they cannot understand because of their own simplicity. Instead, we see a subtle, complex nature, a truly significant man. One detail in particular focuses the film-makers' non-illustrative approach and the character of this soldier: after the hard battle in which the enemy has been beaten back, Shukshin walks down the road with a very free step and suddenly begins to sing a few lines from a popular, pre-war tango: 'I'm returning your picture to you...'

Nonna Mordyukova plays a small, but memorable role in this film. This actress's popularity with audiences continues to grow year by year, although her career began nearly thirty years ago and her number of film roles would be difficult to list. The roles that established her image on the screen were *An Ordinary Story* (from a script written by Budimir Metalnikov especially for Nonna Mordyukova), *Ekaterina Voronina*, *Paternal Home*, *The Chairman*, *War and Peace*, *A Russian Field*, and *No Return*.

Nonna Mordyukova's performances always amaze the viewer with their enormous force, which makes one believe everything she says, does, and experiences. They are well-integrated people, diametrically opposed to those alienated characters with fragmented thoughts and feelings who populate Western films and are offered as norms of human conduct. The secret of Mordyukova's heroines is in their popular spirit and a belief in the great ideas of their time, their love for mankind. This gives them reliable support in all of life's difficult moments, and makes it possible for Mordyukova to

get to the heart of her roles and affirm her characters' outstanding qualities.

The Soviet-Polish co-production, *Remember Your Name*, which told of a woman transported to the Auschwitz death camp, who loses her son there and then finds him more than twenty years later, was warmly received by audiences. But her son finds it difficult to recognize her as his mother, for he was brought up by another woman who seems much more of a mother to him.

Although this plot might seem straight out of a nineteenth-century adventure novel, it deals with real people's lives. The chief role was played by Lyudmila Kassatkina, who did a great deal to affirm sincere feelings on the screen.

*Remember Your Name* treats the theme of the historical friendship between the Polish and Soviet peoples, the theme of internationalism which is becoming more and more important in cinema with every passing year. It makes the unmasking of nationalism and racism, in whatever form it may take, a vital problem of today.

Today's films very often treat the theme of modern heroism. Nearly all the most important works that deal with life today fall into this category. Sociological research shows that these films are well received and liked by audiences. The problem of the contemporary hero is regarded as a central one by the Bulgarian, Polish, Czech, and other socialist cinemas, where it is widely discussed. G. Lonmann, a critic from the German Democratic Republic, stresses: 'The heroic theme does not require exceptional circumstances, as it does in bourgeois society; it is an organic part of our everyday socialist life, the most common circumstances in life.'\* This is the type of heroism about which Lenin spoke: the task of building socialism '...cannot possibly be fulfilled by single acts of heroic fervour; it requires the most prolonged, most persistent

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\* *Weimarer Beitrage*, Berlin, 1970, S.123.

and most difficult mass heroism in *plain, everyday* work.’\*

*The Siberian Girl* (1973) tells of ‘the daily feat of Party workers’ and shows how situations arise in modern life demanding not only creative decisions at the professional and organisational level, but also a moral and civil choice. Conflicts that demand heroic efforts arise in the life of every man, in fact fairly frequently.

The role played by actress Valeria Zaklunnaya in *The Siberian Girl* was especially memorable—a genuine heroic character, in the true sense: Maria Odintsova, the regional Party secretary. Her conflict with the management on the construction site of the hydroelectric station achieves the maximum of dramatic intensity. When all the ‘parliamentary’ means of struggle have been exhausted, she risks her life by going to the site of an impending explosion to save a valuable deposit of marble. The actress is convincing in showing the lofty civil spirit of her heroine, for it is not economic considerations that motivate her to perform this deed. Her motivations are moral in nature: a ‘predatory’ attitude towards nature and what belongs to the state and the people, must never be ignored or passed over, no matter how this attitude shows itself. In fact, this problem is acquiring a global character today—in various forms, depending on the given social conditions.

Heroism of our day has become a very popular theme with film-makers. There have been successful recent films on this subject. Among them is *The Choice of a Goal*, which deals with the life of Academic I. Kurchatov, played with great enthusiasm by Sergei Bondarchuk. *The Taming of Fire* tells of the feat of Soviet scientists, engineers, and workers in the conquest of space. Actor Kirill Lavrov performs in the main role of the chief designer of space ships.

‘The film’s hero is incredibly talented,’ wrote astronaut

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\* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 423.

V. Shatalov, twice-decorated Hero of the Soviet Union, in his review of this film. 'He is talented in his ideas and deeds. That is why he is so demanding of the people around him, why he expects them to think on a grand scale also... The process of gaining knowledge goes on eternally. The creators of this process often remain unknown, and fame only comes to them when they are dead. We astronauts want the people to know much, much more about those amazingly talented people who work alongside us...'

Among their favourite actors audiences always pick out those who play people who are socially active, courageous, and who show their individuality in important actions. Among them are actors Kirill Lavrov, Sergei Bondarchuk, Mikhail Ulyanov, and Vassily Shukshin.

New tendencies have begun to appear in cinema in the treatment of modern themes in recent years. *A Man in the Right Place*, *Our Home Is Here*, and *The Hottest Month* became major cinematic events upon their release. These films were widely discussed among critics and audiences. Although they may not be without their faults, these films were generally acknowledged to have adopted a new, more realistic approach to dealing with changes taking place in factory life today—during the technological revolution in developed socialist society. These changes are influencing not only the production process, but also human relations.

It is only natural that new heroes should appear who are very unlike their recent predecessors. It is typical of them that they not only have outstanding moral qualities, but are also men of action. Their morality is not abstract, as was often the case with some supposedly positive heroes, whose virtues were shown in talk alone. Films built around highly moral, but inactive characters have never been popular with audiences, and have even contributed to a certain devaluation in the very concept of the positive hero. The deficiencies of such films are even more obvious today. Characters like this are essentially abstract and are not really a

part of today's life. That is why some films with seemingly serious content did not prove a success. Even more active characters like those in a fine film entitled *The Last Day*, were not tangible enough. This film, directed by Mikhail Ulyanov, shows the main hero's positive qualities as very real, for police Lieutenant Kovalyov is active throughout the film. Nonetheless, his activity is somewhat abstract, it contains very few signs of the times, and the hero is not very capable in his actions, nor is he truly up-to-date in his complex profession. In certain situations he is shown as a man of undoubted intellectual qualities, but rather dilettantish in the professional sense. In the last scene, showing the arrest of the criminals, Kovalyov acts very unwisely and dies as a result of his bad judgement.

The results of a sociological survey made in Bulgaria are very interesting in this connection. Soviet films are very popular with audiences in this country. *The Last Day* was highly praised by audiences, as were the virtues of the main character. All those who answered the survey recognised him as a positive hero, but two-thirds had certain reservations ('he is not typical', 'he is often naive') and the sociologists in charge of the survey believed that Lieutenant Kovalyov's 'absurd death' was instrumental in forming the audience's judgement. A police lieutenant is supposed to fight criminals by other means, viewers believed.

The heroes of *A Man in the Right Place*, *Our Home Is Here*, and *The Hottest Month* are by no means idealised, in some respects they are even controversial. However, they possess the major traits of today's hero—a profound, concrete understanding of the tasks of the times and a conscious, unbending instinct for the right decision in frequently complex, risky situations.

The harshness of these films' central characters is not fully justified, as critics frequently observed, but their striving towards realistic thinking, against falsity and lack of clarity in people's relations, against demagoguery, which sometimes

conceals the inability or lack of desire to contribute to the common cause, is undeniable.

Films of this type have great significance for cinema as a whole. Their appearance put an end to films about production problems which were often treated in a narrowly sociological way unacceptable to art in which characters had little individuality and played a secondary role to the plot.

The new level of realism and the tangible sense of contemporary life that they represented makes it impossible now for any type of abstractly moralising approach, which was so frequent in so-called 'youth' films with infantile heroes which 'knew what shouldn't be done, but don't know what should be done and what they want'.

Other films dealing with the problems raised in *A Man in the Right Place*, *Our Home Is Here*, and *The Hottest Month* have simply repeated their statement of these problems without further developing them, in fact by simplifying them. Among such films can be counted *Old Walls*, an example of the 'lyrical', 'feminine' tendency in realism. During the past five years new paths have been laid for bringing films closer to life, to today, and to audiences.

*The Bonus*, directed by S. Mikaelyan from a script by A. Gelman, was acclaimed as a major work by audiences at large and by responsible public opinion. The film discussed at many different levels as a reality from life itself, for everyone left the problems it raised to be immediate and urgent. Foreman Potapov, on whose initiative the bonus was rejected, clearly expressed the psychology and world-view of a man representing the avant-garde today. He defines the moral climate of a working group today, which is impatient with any falsity or deviousness, when workers feel themselves leaders of the country, responsible for everything that goes on around them and adopt an active civil position.

*The Feed-back*, directed by V. Tregubovich from another script by A. Gelman, continues certain of the themes brought up in *The Bonus*. The dramatic action focuses on the opening



of a large enterprise.' It transpires that the obligations that the heads of the enterprise have taken on themselves are impossible to carry out in the circumstances. There is nothing especially gripping in the film, it simply shows a group of people working in this enterprise. However, they are not presented in a one-sided fashion: the conflicts between them are so sharp that each of them shows the most important aspect in his character, the centre of his personality.

The film contains a great deal of criticism and satire on all sort of faults in the economy, production, and construction today. For instance, the very process of management is often too complicated, the planning process is sometimes too arbitrary, and there is often too little thought given to the future of an enterprise, to branches of the economy, etc. This film is exceptionally demanding on its audiences. However, at the end, the viewer feels a sense of satisfaction that he has not only learned a great deal about the production process today, but has also come into contact with the modern way of thinking and discussing major problems.

The film's leading characters have various occupations and positions, from the modest senior economist to the district Party Secretary, but they are all capable of thinking in terms of the state's well-being. One of the main ideas is that a great deal depends on individual initiative, on the necessity for such initiatives, although the film shows that to show such initiative sometimes requires a great deal of civil courage. However, the moral principles on which Soviet society is founded guide a man in this direction.

The development of cinema, as any other art-form, is not just a triumphant march from one success to another. There are whole years seemingly made up of failures. However, socialist realist art shows an undoubted, constant progress.

Cinema today is developing in new and special conditions. The spending of leisure time is becoming more complicated and varied for the Soviet population with the growth in culture and the rising standard of living. Recent years have seen an

upsurge in tourism. There has also been a recent 'explosion' in visitors to museums, a sharply heightened interest in the visual arts and the life of outstanding people. Interest is growing in music, the theatre, literature, and in collecting. As television acquires a firmer place in the leisure of the population audiences' demands on cinema also grow. Audiences throughout the world expect answer to many vital questions from films. Viewers always want to see major ideas, strong feelings and characters depicted on the screen.

## CINEMA AND TELEVISION—ALLIES OR ENEMIES?

In glancing through any of the studies conducted by film historians and sociologists in the United States, France, West Germany, Great Britain, or Italy on the sociological problems of cinema and the mass media, or in leafing through sociological surveys on mass audiences or articles in magazines and newspapers discussing the cinema and media in today's society, one finds many different opinions expressed by experts, public figures, and television reviewers who are trying to understand the current state and future development of the competition between these two giants of the mass media in industrially-developed society, in developing countries, and the uses of cinema and television in forming public opinion, as well as reducing individuality in bourgeois society. There have, in fact, been more studies written about television than about cinema.

This is understandable, for no other means of mass communication has developed and expanded as quickly as television. The production and sales of television sets have reached avalanche proportions, while television technology is being constantly perfected and television transmission is continuously being developed and made more effective.

A little more than half a century ago, B. Rosing, a professor at the Petersburg Technological Institute and inventor of electronic television, published an article about the practical applications of his invention for transmitting images across a given distance (Professor Rosing called it a telescope). There were the first lines on a subject that is today discussed—with joy or anxiety—by hundreds of scholars throughout the world: television and society, television and culture. Professor Rosing said in his article:

‘If we send these telescope receivers down into the ocean

we can see the life and treasures hidden in its depths... Without leaving his office an engineer can see whatever is going on in the workshops, warehouses, and on the shopfloor. We will be able to see pictures of goods offered to us across hundreds of kilometres. A sick man confined to his bed will be able to enter into contact with the life of society, which would otherwise be inaccessible to him, through this apparatus... He will be able to see everything going on in the streets, squares, and theatres.'

Re-reading these lines today creates a strange sensation. The inventor was writing with great foresight about the future engineering, production, advertising, and commercial use of television. Yet the most important use of TV in today's society seemed secondary to the professor, of significance only for sick people confined to their beds. Of course, Professor Rosing realised that his 'telescope' could transmit a picture from Moscow to distant corners of Russia, but he could not imagine that in Yakutsk, for instance, someone might want to watch the Bolshoi Ballet, not just to see a range of goods — that is, he failed to understand the depth and scale of television's historical, social, cultural changes and consequences, and — at the same time — failed to understand the wide-ranging instrument that television would become.

More than fifty years have passed since then. Television has become the first cosmic proof that our planet is inhabited: because of the fact that metre-wide television waves leave the limits of the earth, our planet must seem a mysterious source of radiation to inhabitants of other planets. But what is truly amazing is that it is still easier for us to imagine these scholars on distant planets trying to figure out the reason for the earth's radiation than to comprehend the actual depth of the changes that have occurred in our lives and outlooks — in short, in ourselves and our surrounding with the coming of television. The changes associated with TV are obviously of such great importance that they can be more easily seen indirectly at a distance.

A play's success or failure can be judged by the size of the

audience in the théâtre and its reaction. A film's popularity can be determined — approximately at least — by the number of tickets sold. But how many people have watched a programme on television? This question can only be answered by special scientific research, frequently more exhaustive and complicated than the effort that has gone into preparing the programme itself. However, the popularity of a programme can also be gauged by indirect indicators. For instance, statistics on the usage of municipal water and electricity also indicate how many viewers a given programme has. When an interesting programme goes on the air, the use of water drops sharply across the country and goes up again just as sharply when the programme ends; the usage of electricity operates in the reverse. In other words, the popularity of any television series or broadcast can be gauged fairly accurately in hectolitres and kilowatts, and television critics would be right to say: 'The energy of the first part of the television film was equal to 3.5 million kilowatt hours, while the second part was much waterier (6 million a minute), and the action in the third and fourth parts was much weaker, with interest dropping to 0.8 million kilowatts — i.e. to a level regarded as typical for an opera, not a detective story.'

Although this unusual means of measuring popularity may be amusing, the situation is in fact serious: television is one of the most powerful factors determining leisure time use for an enormous body of people. The average American family watches TV six hours a day. The average Soviet viewer watches T.V. 2-2 1/2 hours a day. Further we shall discuss what these figures mean, but we would like to point out that men spend more time working and sleeping, and women spend more time working, sleeping, and taking care of the house than they do watching television. When a family buys a television set, first they rearrange their furniture, then they rearrange their lives to accommodate it. We do not even notice that this is happening. For instance:

the television schedule has become, to a greater or lesser

degree, the schedule of the way we spend our leisure time, the schedule of our conversations with family and friends, the schedule of our intellectual life;

our children are the children of the TV era: they get to know the Antarctic, Africa, and even the landscape of the Moon sooner than they do their own city or neighbourhood; they know the world's most famous people better than their next-door neighbours, sometimes even better than us. After all, they see and hear this television idols as often as they do us;

our ideas about the world around us have also changed radically; the world has become transparent, distances have been changed for events, and geography for history; the world has become an informational milieu in which we live, which prompted Marshall McLuhan to say that we live in a global village.

Another side-effect is that the popularity of certain TV programmes influences crime statistics: for instance, on the day on which the popular Soviet series *Seventeen Moments of Spring* was shown the number of incidents on the streets and public transport dropped noticeably. TV also influences labour productivity. Sports programmes have a particularly marked effect: the productivity of the fans of the losing team drops, while the fans of the winning team are even more productive than usual (the margin varies between 20-25 per cent, according to some statistics, a serious margin). And finally, statistics about movie attendance are also a sensitive indicator of television popularity: on evenings when popular programmes are aired, especially television series and sports events, fewer people go out to the movies.

This is very serious, indeed: it seems obvious that television is competing with (perhaps even squeezing out of our lives) the traditional forms of art: cinema, theatre, even literature to some degree, deprive us of our direct contact with art, assimilating one form of art after another, one genre after another, and is becoming a monopoly of sorts, furnishing the population with standardised cultural nourishment.

Fortunately, what seems obvious is not always the full truth. The relation of television to art and to all forms of artistic culture are much more complex and dialectical than the superficial aspects we notice in our day-to-day lives. Some of the processes linked to the development of television are so subtle and profound that they cannot be measured even by modern research methods.

The development of television has given rise to many problems, some of which are common to all the industrially-developed countries: the growth in the television audience, the re-allotting of leisure time, and the drop in cinema attendance.\*

The expansion of television has produced lively discussion about the relations between the new means of mass communication and the older ones and with popular literature, theatre and cinema.

The spread of television has resurrected question as old as culture itself: 'will the new art-form kill the old?' The development of the technology of production of cultural values constantly brings up this question. Each new device seems broader and more universal than the previous one in its representative and communicative possibilities; and so people

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\* Film distributors cannot fail to have noticed the decline in cinema attendance in the 1960s and 1970s. Sociologists indicate the spread of television among the population at large as one reason for this decline. Thus, although the growth in cinema attendance in Moscow was stable up to 1968 as a result of the increase in the number of cinema theatres and the improvement in cinema services, with statistics showing that by 1968 cinema attendance was up to 116,567,000, in 1969 this attendance had declined by 2,303,000 and in 1973 by 3,105,000, making the figure for 1973 111,159,000 cinema tickets sold per year. The situation is even more critical in the West. According to the West German magazine *Der Stern*, between 1960-1971 the number of cinema projection units (fixed and moving) declined from 7000 to 3314 units. Since 1960 the French cinema has lost 50 per cent of its audience. In 1970 alone, 150 cinema theatres closed and over the past ten years nearly 1500 cinema theatres have closed altogether.



constantly wonder whether new system will devour the previous one, whether the old system will become obsolete.

Socrates said that literacy would lead to the decline of mankind and kill off culture, for men would start to rely on writing, not on their memories, and their inner world would be the poorer for this, their thought processes would atrophy. Several thousand years later, in an era dominated by cinema, it has often been said that live theatre is doomed, for the cinema screen is not only able to show a play, but is also to enrich it by choosing the most successful 'takes', by editing methods, perspectives, and various technical tricks. What is more, the cinema includes many genres that the theatre cannot even attempt: it can record real events, it can base a film on documental sources, footage, etc. Finally, the cinema reaches a wider audience than the theatre, and this is a definite social advantage.

Some cinema historians (S.Iosifian, T. Seleznyova) have observed that what has been said about the relation of television to cinema contains a great deal similar to what was said about the relation of cinema to theatre. Art historians (and in the 1920s sociological research was not applied to theatre and cinema) stated categorically that the theatre had many virtues that cinema could not have. They granted that cinema was able to fix 'the rhythm and tempo of today's life' and that it could faithfully reproduce an event directly from life. Art historians said that among cinema's good points were that it was 'primitive and spontaneous' in its disclosure of the essence and character of phenomena and facts. Some historians believed that when a man is shown on the screen his character is immediately obvious to the naked eye. The audience instantly knows whether he is a villain or a hero. Theatre, on the other hand, possesses 'those subtle, gentle nuances that indicate complex inner processes inaccessible to the cinema...'\*

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\* T. Seleznyova, *Cinema-thought of the 1920s*, Leningrad, 1972, pp.9-10 (in Russian).

Cinema was also assigned the role of cultural educator. From the point of view of an art historian in the 1920s, cinema was a means of directly reflecting life, an art directed at the masses. The theatre was left to its own 'creative, human work'.

Life itself, the development of cinema, and the development of cinema studies (semiotics and the semantics of film, for instance), have shown that things are not quite this simple in defining the functions of cinema and theatre, in marking out their spheres of influence on mass audiences. The real situation demands a dialectical approach to complex social and aesthetic phenomena that arise at the meeting point of cinema and theatre. It has also become clear that cinema will not make the theatre obsolete or reduce it to a second-rank means of mass communication in modern society.

We know how life has resolved these situations, though they may have seemed very dramatic and critical at the time. Nonetheless, during the 1950s and 1960s similar theoretical discussions arose in connection with the rapid development of television: would television squeeze out (or even 'kill off') the art-forms that preceded it—cinema, as well as the theatre, and books? The greatest fears were expressed for cinema, for the showing of films on television, unlike adaptations of plays or books, does not require any change and is not a creative process, only a technical one. In other words, there are no 'natural' barriers between the cinema and television screens, and television is an even more universal system than is cinema. Television, in technical terms, has a high degree of 'freedom'. Basically, it can do everything that cinema can, but its possibilities are much broader, i.e. it can show a work to all its viewers at the same time, it provides its programmes to the audience at home, it frees the programme's writer from time limitations (a TV programme can last five minutes or five years, evening after evening, which opens up untold possibilities to the artist) and, finally, it can show an event at the moment it takes place.

The effect of the television screen can be enhanced by a number of methods used in news casts; their up-to-the-minute nature, their conciseness, the possibility of repeating, thus creating a 'cumulative effect', etc., which makes news and information that the viewer sees on television more accessible than what he might see in the cinema, hear on the radio, or read in the newspaper.

The effectiveness of television as an audio-visual means of mass communication can be significantly enhanced through special psychological methods, 'subliminal techniques', for instance.\*

Reflections of this type would lead us to the logical conclusion that cinema is doomed if effective measures are not immediately undertaken. Artificial barriers—economic, commercial, and technical barriers—have begun to be erected between television and cinema in a number of countries, for instance, the introduction of wide-screen films and other techniques was prompted by competitive motives, the wish to make cinema as unlike television as possible, and therefore irreplaceable by TV.

Is this a phenomenon brought about by the way television and cinema function in bourgeois society, characterised by antagonistic struggle, the cult of profit, the fear of economic failure? Or is this phenomenon typical of any society, including socialist society?

In the Soviet Union, as in the developed countries of the West, recent years have seen the rapid development of the television and cinema techniques. In socialist society both cinema and television are state institutions: it seems that there cannot be any commercial competition between them.

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\* 'Subliminal techniques' use unconscious stimuli so that, with only a very brief exposure to the stimulus the viewer's consciousness absorbs it, even though he does not notice it, and it is imprinted in his mind, where it will have the desired effect. This technique has been used in Western advertising.

Their relation to each other is regulated by one criterion alone—the interests of society, the interests of the viewers at large. But what are these interests? Will they not be harmed if viewers go less frequently to the cinema and are satisfied by simply watching television? A full answer can only be provided by broad-scale research into the mutual relations between cinema and television.

Studies of this type are being carried out at all levels and by many different methods. For instance, all the Soviet Union's one hundred and twenty-five television studios received the right from the very beginning to broadcast all the films produced in this country—after, of course, they have been premiered in the cinema theatres. And so viewers knew that if they did not manage to see a new film on the big screen, they would soon see it on television. Suffice it to say that the first channel (nation-wide) of the Central Television studios shows 300-400 films per year: this is three times the yearly film production in our country.

Television has also received the right to televise, by agreement, nearly all the plays performed in the theatres. Documental and popular scientific films and newsreels occupy a unique position, for television constantly shows them simultaneously with their release in the cinema theatres, sometimes even earlier.

Finally, Soviet television studios commission an enormous number of television productions, adaptations of literary works, and fictional and documental films, that are also able to 'compete' with cinema; to be more precise, they nearly double the number of films shown on TV programmes.

The question of whether television would make obsolete the preceding art-forms—cinema, theatre, and books and of how it would affect the other mass media and cultural use of leisure time, was formulated clearly, as sociologists would say, and was based solidly on statistics.

Theory is always ahead of practice. Sociologists, film historians, and television researchers examined the dynamics

of the development of television and cinema, and analysed statistics furnished by studies carried out in this field in the United States and Europe providing material for the most varied hypotheses.

Some suggested that television is not only dangerous because people will go out to the cinema and theatre less frequently because TV is a more convenient, accessible, and universal cultural service, but also because the habit of being satisfied by a small-format copy can dull the audience's aesthetic taste, leading to a decline in cultural standards, while the habit of viewing plays or films at home, without any sense of festivity, creates an overly 'familiar' attitude towards art and turns it into just one more element in our daily comfort—in short, into something that stimulates our digestive processes more than our sense of spiritual contact.

Thoughts of this type led to the conclusion that in the interests of society cinema, literature, and theatre should be protected from TV. Television, after all, is a daily 'issue' like a newspaper, which is not a field for creative endeavour and has its own tasks and criteria determining the character of literary works included in its publicist, informational context.

Optimists saw things differently. In their opinion, films and plays have been so intensively drawn on by television because TV has not yet realised its specific artistic task: reporting, documental films, improvised programmes, and serials. As television slowly acquires its own identity, it will develop, in the process rejecting works from the cinema and theatre as unsuited to the television screen. As a result, both television and cinema will develop in their own way without replacing each other.

There were a great many hypotheses. Researchers agreed on one thing, that television could not fail to affect culture as a whole, the whole system of relations between art and its audience, and this influence is varied and should be studied in all its aspects:

—in its economic aspect: because the audience's free time will be re-allotted between the wider choice of mass media, and the audience for each of the arts will change;

—in its psychological aspect: for television will introduce certain correctives into the perception of each of the arts, if only because the showing of a film or a play in an unusual context will change the psychological distance between art and its audience;

—in its functional aspect: for with the appearance of each new means of communication the function of all the others changes and becomes more precise. The audience has no specific need for TV, the cinema, or the theatre. For the audience all these media are a means of satisfying its needs for relaxation, information, and communication. If there were no choice, all these needs could merge into one channel, for instance, into cinema, which would have to satisfy informational, aesthetic, recreational, and the social-communicative interests of the audience. With the appearance of a new medium, for instance, television, part of these needs (the need for information about the world, and for emotional and psychological compensation) is re-directed into this channel; as a consequence, the function of cinema is fundamentally changed;

—finally, the aesthetic aspect: appearance of new expressive and communicative possibilities, as well as changes in the audience's perceived needs, stimulates artists to assimilate these new creative possibilities, resolve new tasks, or—on the contrary—to reject those tasks that could better be solved by the new medium, and to search for and develop new possibilities in their own art-forms.

However, regardless of how serious these reasons may be, they lose their importance in the face of counter-arguments that immediately define our television's cultural policies. The essence of these arguments is simple, yet profound:

—maybe some part of Moscow's audience will stop going to the Bolshoi or the Moscow Art Theatre and will be satisfied with 'copies' on the television screen, but on the other hand, an

enormous mass of people will be introduced to our cultural heritage. The truth is very concrete: when we wonder whether TV is harmful or beneficial, we should not compare a Bolshoi ballet with its reproduction on television, but this television reproduction with the real possibilities that an overwhelming body of people have for receiving artistic impressions in any other way;

—of course, a film is better seen on a large, rather than a small screen. Cinemas may, in fact, lose a part of their audiences. But if those people who stop going to the cinema will watch more films on television than they did before, this will show not a decline, but an increase in cinema's role in the life of society.

In other words, all the commercial, bureaucratic, and aesthetic views on TV's role were quickly dispelled by the conception of television as an important instrument in a new stage of the cultural revolution in developed socialist society.

The years passed. What had been a mysterious future at the beginning became a backward glance enabling us to measure the influence of TV on cinema and the cultural system as a whole, to evaluate the truth of the various hypotheses, and introduce certain correctives into the new hypotheses and forecasts now being made.

Reality turned to be more complicated, and varied than predicted by theories. Some theories were totally refuted by reality, some were fundamentally altered, and others simply fell by the wayside.

Cultural history shows that when new means of communication arise, they are accompanied by an expansion of the audience for culture, taking in those strata that earlier had been beyond the fringe of institutionalised culture. Thus, cinema could not 'do away' with theatre by stealing its audience, if only because film-goers came from new segments of the population—the masses, which only came into contact with professional culture thanks to the cinema. Nor could radio



have newspapers, because the majority of its listeners did not see radio as equivalent to the newspaper. Radio did not take away listeners, but brought them into contact with knowledge, politics, and culture; it developed needs that, when reached a given level, were channelled into other, more complex means of communication: newspapers, and magazines. This same rule is true for television in its relation to the theatre and books.

However, the relation of TV to cinema is somewhat different. Cinema is the most accessible means of communication after television; that is why it filled literary-theatrical vacuum that TV also strove to fill.

At first the rapid development of television produced a noticeable drop in cinema attendance. Television was a novelty, for one was not simply watching a film, but 'one's own television', and what is a novelty in culture—by analogy with technical novelties—always seems better than the old. However, before drawing the conclusion that television has taken away part of the cinema's audience, we should define our terms more precisely: what exactly do we mean by 'cinema': 'cinema theatre' or 'the art of cinema'? It is important to define terms, for although part of the audience has started to go to the cinema less frequently, all of the viewers, including those who prefer to sit in front of their own television sets, are now seeing films more frequently. Research shows that while the 'average viewer' goes out to a movie only once or twice a month, he watches films on television two or three times a week. What is more, the most devoted film-lovers turn out to be those viewers who have stopped going out to movies nearly altogether: they watch eight or more films per week. Television has turned out to be cinema's Trojan horse; because of TV, cinema has won an audience several times larger than it had before. (But this refers to fictional films. The changes that have taken place in audiences for documental and popular scientific films, and cartoons cannot be analysed precisely, but individual statistics would suggest that thanks to television their audience has grown ten-fold.)

During television's entire existence, fictional films have remained the most popular TV programmes. According to statistics furnished by the Institute for Research into the Theory and History of Cinema, fictional films have a television audience twice as large as that for televised sports events.

The period of television's explosion lasted several years; 1967-1968 can be considered the peak years, i.e., the years in which television was introduced into most apartments. Since then the novelty has worn off and television has become a constant feature of our lives.

Television has squeezed out cinema to occupy first place in the leisure time pursuits of both city-dwellers and villagers. Television programmes are watched intensively: survey statistics show that more than 40 per cent of villagers and city-dwellers watch TV in their free time, the same percentage as those who go to cinema theatres and read fiction. What is more, over 50 per cent of these viewers watch television daily.

The type of effect TV has on its audience has gradually changed recently. Television has differently affected areas of the country where television was introduced 10-15 years ago and only recently. Comparing film distribution statistics with those relating to television's introduction shows the following dependence between them.

For the first year or so, television has no appreciable influence on cinema attendance, for it cannot break down people's leisure time habits, nor does every home possess a television set at first. But then cinema attendance begins to drop. This period continues for 6-10 years and hits its peak when 70-80 per cent of homes possess television sets.

In the following period the curve showing cinema attendance rises again and evens off at a median level. This happens partially because film distribution adapts itself to the new circumstances, but mostly because people become accustomed to television and stop watching all TV programmes without distinction. Viewers begin to choose what they wish to see.

In a situation like this—and it is typical for the present moment—the situation begins to depend on the repertoire available, the ability to satisfy the audience's desires now that this audience has been 'spoiled', to a certain degree, by television.

This tendency has been confirmed by surveys in major Soviet cities carried out by researchers at the Institute for Research into the Theory and History of Cinema. Concrete sociological research to determine the influence of TV and cinema on each other convincingly shows that, in viewers' opinions, the more television sets there are per hundred viewers, the less negative influence television has on cinema attendance.

The presence of a television set affects viewers' attitudes towards cinema differently in different social and demographic sectors of the population. Television has the least negative influence on cinema attendance among young people; as viewers' age rises the negative influence of television also rises. Under television's influence, the cinema audience becomes more youthful, and this has appreciable influence on the repertoire and various forms of cinema.

The most obvious difference in TV's influence on various age groups is to be found in the difference between viewers in the cities and villages. Cinema attendance in the villages is lower because the average age of village inhabitants is higher, and therefore they are more orientated towards television.

Among the urban cinema audience education has a strong influence on how much a person watches television: the higher the educational level, the less a person watches television. In the village, this is reversed: the higher a person's education, the more time he spends in front of the television. This is evidently due to the fact that other forms of cultural and information service to be found in the village do not satisfy the growing needs of this category of viewers; despite all its faults, television is the most favoured form. The differences in attitude

towards television on the part of villagers and city-dwellers attest to the equality of their intellectual needs, which for villagers can be satisfied by greater use of the television set.

Studies have convincingly refuted the idea that the more a viewer watches films on television, the less he actually goes to the cinema. This dependence is only true for that section of the audience that does not go out to the cinema because of their health or age, or because there is no cinema theatre nearby. A more positive dependence is shown in the behaviour of other groups of viewers—the more often a person watches films on television, the more often he goes out to the movies.

The fact that films can be seen on television does not necessarily lower cinema attendance. The dependence between these two factors is entirely different: if a person likes films in general, then he tries to see films on television or on the cinema screen—depending, of course, on the films available, the amount of his free time, and other factors. The cinema should not only want television not to be ahead of the movie theatres, but also for television not to detract from viewers' love of films or lower the prestige of cinema by showing a large number of mediocre films. (This is also true of television's relation to the other arts: theatre, the musical stage, literature, and music.) Bad reproductive telecasts detract from the audience's interest in all these art-forms; good programmes satisfy interest in the art they are showing for one section of the audience, while interest is heightened for another section of the audience. So, in contrast to our usual ideas, a high level of television programmes and a full representation of all the arts on the television screen can only work in the interests of art. It is a curious fact that, while Soviet television shows nearly all the films produced in our country, cinema attendance has only gone down over the last 10-15 years from 23-25 films per year (per person) to 18-19 films per year. Yet in those countries where television has been separated from cinema by a thick barrier erected for commercial reasons, the popularity of movie theatres has fallen to 5 films per

viewer per year (the United States) and 2 films per year (Japan).

Television's influence on the viewer's attitude towards various genres and forms of cinema varies. Most viewers prefer to watch long films on television. Documental films, especially those made for television series, are particularly popular on television: on the series 'The Animal World', 'The Travel Club', and 'Fact Is Stranger Than Fiction', for example. A study made by the present writers showed that 18 per cent of the audience prefer to watch documental films on television, 20 per cent prefer fictional films, and 48 per cent said they like both documental and fictional films equally well; 54 per cent prefer to watch documental films on television, rather than in cinema theatres, and only 12 per cent said they preferred it the other way round.

Behind these individual statistics showing television's influence on the audience for art as a whole, and cinema in particular, we can catch a glimpse of something very important.

Television, it turns out, does not bring about a decrease in the absolute significance of any of the arts for the Soviet audience. However, it does radically alter their relative importance in the structure of its audience's interests, depriving some art-forms of their former monopoly on the culture of the masses.

For instance, the 'absolute weight' of fictional films in our intellectual 'balance' has grown enormously, but their relative importance has declined, inasmuch as other types of films have acquired great importance thanks to television, especially documental films. The proportional representation of cinema, theatre, musical shows, poetry readings, etc., has shifted in favour of the art-forms that previously scarcely existed in the cultural spectrum of the majority of our country's population, cutting right across social and regional differences. Art as a whole felt the squeeze from documental information, on the one hand, satisfying the television audience's informational and aesthetic needs (many newscasts and programmes

of political comment show television to be not only a chronicler, but also a documental artist of sorts), and, on the other hand, from sports and similar events, which also satisfy the audience's emotional and psychological needs, that were previously only filled by art.

And so, although our contact with culture has become to a certain degree standardised by television, our intellectual world has acquired new dimensions. Given reasonable social conditions, television's breadth and universal nature do not lead to a 'stretching and thinning' of culture nor to its simplification and standardisation, but to a broader representation of all the arts in the people's intellectual life.

Television not only technically guarantees this process, it also actively regulates it, making fundamental changes in the existence and development of various genres and art-forms. Each time this happens, television's regulative influence on art appears superficial at first, but then reveals its profounder consequences.

Let us continue our mental journey along the 'spirals' of television's influence, gradually widening our range to include changes entailed by television's development and analysing their aesthetic consequences. But first, let us finish our examination of television's effect on cinema.

TV effect is different on various days of the week. On weekdays 20 per cent of viewers prefer to go out to a movie, while 56 per cent prefer to stay in and watch television; on people's days off the proportion changes in favour of cinema (46 per cent and 42 per cent), and on holidays the proportion shifts back in favour of television (30 per cent and 38 per cent). This, of course, makes certain demands on the films shown: most viewers associate their day off with some bright form of entertainment, something they cannot usually do on workdays. The simple fact of going out to a movie is seen as a festive event by 54 per cent of viewers.

Television increased the differentiation of the audience at the so-called 'micro-level'—the level of group relations.

A telecast is generally seen by a viewer who, at that given moment, is 'a family member', feeling himself bound by the norms and values of the family group. At the movie theatre a film is generally watched by members of a group of friends. Is that important? It turns out to be very important. Social psychologists have proven convincingly that groups, and the situational factors working within them, act as a sort of filter on the perception of information, strengthening or weakening it, perhaps even deforming it, and that the character of the audience and, consequently, the demands it makes on the screen, are not determined by its 'atoms'—i.e. the individual viewers—but by 'molecules', i.e. groups.

These, then, are the basic traits, the simplest sociological cross-section showing television's influence on cinema. It does not show the changes that have taken place in the art of cinema itself, but in the audience for the various arts. However, culture's destiny is inseparable from the evolution of tastes, demands, expectations, and orientations of the audience; it is concealed in the audience's demands, and is an answer to them. Television influences art by many other means, however the most powerful factor in television's influence on art are the changes that it produces in the behaviour, interests, and demands of its audience.

Some of the consequences of this influence we have noted in passing, and many others are also not difficult to notice. For instance, in satisfying its audience's most common needs—i.e. informational, recreational (their need for rest and relaxation), etc.—television has caused the cinema audience to, firstly, break up into groups with marked specialised interests that cannot be satisfied by a small quantity of films aimed at satisfying mass taste. Therefore, although the total audience may have decreased somewhat, yet it needs more films, including films that will not attract mass audiences, but only small ones, and this leads to a more varied output of films (as well as of the other arts) and encourages film-makers to experiment. Secondly, the audience's informational needs are also satisfied



to a large degree by television, as we noted above, and so the viewer expects 'the unusual' from art, not external similarity, but a profound comprehension of the world, not 'information' but 'transformation'. We are often surprised and disappointed when we see that audiences have rejected what seems a good and useful film that shows things 'just as they are in life', yet they flock to a film that shows things as they never were in life. Are they rejecting realism?

No, they are not rejecting realism, only unimaginative photographic copies of life, they are demanding artistic truth from art, true artistic realism which lies in understanding man's soul, as Stanislavsky said on this subject. The audience seeks the world of human subjectivity in art, a world transformed by the artist's imagination and talent — and they seek this because television gives them a real and adequate picture of the objective world. It is entirely another matter that, not finding the desired depth in realistic art, the viewer may sometimes accept surrogates in some foreign films in place of artistically valid depictions of thoughts and feelings.

It is obvious that television in socialist society has produced entirely different results than what was predicted in terms of the standardisation and debasing of culture. This is due above all to the high quality of television programmes.\* Need we say that Soviet television does not allow any mani-

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\* Let us look at a schedule for a typical day's programmes. We shall list only the fictional and publicistic programmes shown on the three main television channels:

— *The Red and the Black*, a serial film made for television based on Stendahl's novel;

—the TV play *Boris Godunov*;

—reviews: 'In the Moscow Concert Halls', 'Voices and Colours', and the musical programme 'Artloto';

—a concert by the Leningrad instrumental group, 'The Serenade', and a concert-film, *Four Springs*;

—two fictional films, *Four Hearts* (from a series about cinema history) and *The Secret of the Mountain Lake*;

pulation of its audience by playing on low passions and instincts? This is a well-known fact. However, even with the best intentions to make a programme that satisfies the artistic and intellectual tastes and takes into consideration the interests of various groups of viewers—this is an enormous task. This requires more than professional skill of television filmmakers. In any case, many of our foreign colleagues are up to the mark in the way of professional skill. The problem is a different one altogether. The high level of television programmes is impossible to sustain when there is competition between various spheres of production and cultural standardisation. Unlike trying to catch a likely buyer for a car, catching a buyer for a programme brings about a debasing of culture, which becomes something like a good car: something pleasant, simple, and easy to deal with, able to reliably insulate its owner from the surrounding world.

Bourgeois television and cinema cannot serve society as a whole as long as they remain in the hands of monopolies and are a form of business. This has given rise to justified criticism of television on the part of sociologists, progressive social figures, and cultural figures in the United States, West Germany, France, and other Western countries.

The president of one of the major American television companies once admitted that television programmes often appeal to the lowest common denominator—entertainment, and that this is dictated by the advertising firms which dictate the television networks' policies. The magazine *Advertising Age*, published an article by Francis McGee in which the author said outright: 'Our basic problem ... is not with the public or the politicians. Our problem is with some of the owners of

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- 'Literary Colloquies';
  - an amateur programme: 'Young Readers' Competition';
  - three documental film series;
  - cartoons, fairy-tales, and an educational programme for school-children.

American business... They are individuals who actually buy the advertising and sign the checks for it. They are the ones who pervert and prostitute it.’\*

‘No one should have illusions about Television. It is never going to be primarily an educational and cultural medium,’ American television commentator E. Sevareid wrote in *TV Guide Roundup*.

In E. Murrow’s opinion, American television ‘is being used to distract, delude, amuse and insulate’. To isolate oneself, we might add, from the social problems one encounters in real life.

The National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA has also given its opinion on television as a means of mass communication in its statement entitled, ‘The Church and the Mass Media’, which termed the mass media responsible for the moral decay of American society.

Similar criticism can be found on the pages of specialised and public affairs journals not only in America, but in France, West Germany, and Italy, as well.

A reply to the question posed by many TV viewers, public figures, educationalists, and cultural figures—why television in bourgeois society does not serve the interests of the broad masses—was given once by American journalist and social commentator Walter Lippman, who claims that the television industry has been ‘involved in an enormous conspiracy to deceive the public... Television was now the creature, the servant, and indeed the prostitute, of merchandising.’\*\*

The level of programmes on Soviet television is not a result of the skill of the people who have made them, as much as of the specific features of socialist social relations and their manifestations in artistic culture.

Soviet television programmes are not made at the central

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\* M. Weinberg, *TV in America. The Morality of Hard Cash*. New York, 1962, p. 232.

\*\* M. Weinberg, *Op. cit.*, p. 258.

television studios—these studios produce only a small proportion of them, while only formulating the rest; they are made by creative collectives throughout the country, by all the spheres of our cultural production. Therefore Soviet television programmes have an enormous reproductive function and a relatively small part contributed by the efforts of the central studios.

This might be interpreted as an infringement on television's creativity, but that would not be the truth. The high proportion of reproductive telecasts ensure the most favourable conditions for serious creative searchings in television, freeing it from tasks beyond its capacities that might deform its development. But the most important thing is that it concentrates all the best created by our country's culture on the television screen, and turns nation-wide channels into a field for inter-action between all the television studios and a means of exchange of cultural values between all the peoples of our country, making this most popular of the mass media the bearer of high criteria of quality, setting the tone for all the other spheres of culture.

We by no means wish to say that everything about Soviet television is above criticism, that it positively and uncontradictorily affects cultural processes, that there are no mediocre programmes or other problems. We are merely speaking of the dominant tendency. On the whole, by showing the best films, plays, the best fictional and documental films made especially for television, Soviet television establishes very high standards for our cultural activity. It also sustains the cultural and aesthetic needs of tens of millions of people at a desirable level. And it absorbs the most common 'mass' needs, preparing a demanding and 'specialised' audience for art—an audience that goes to the theatre, concert hall, or cinema not because they have nothing else to do in their leisure time, but because they are searching for full-fledged aesthetic impressions.

Television's activity in socialist society creates an intensely creative, lively atmosphere for the whole cultural system. Of course, there are sometimes attempts to find an easy way

out of this situation. For instance, there have been attempts to return part of the public taken away by television to the theatre and concert halls, and to the cinemas, by offering them light, frothy spectacles. However, what is the film distribution system or concert organisations are trying to compete with in such a situation? Not with television, but with the films, plays, and musical programmes shown on television, attracting audiences to the television screen. We know, moreover, that television, by virtue of its adaptive capacity, makes the same production seem more accessible (psychologically and intellectually) to a wider circle of people, than it does in its original context. Therefore, in order to compete with television, film distributors would have to lower the intellectual level of their repertoire to the level of the foreign film industry, which is based on surrogates and fantasies of 'the sweet life'. The box-office success of these films, even here in our country, is enormous. This success is a result of an audience brought up on television and in a sort of transient cultural state: their link with traditional, regional subcultures has been weakened, but they have not yet been integrated into the world of real, contemporary artistic traditions and values—they are in a semi-cultured state, lacking any firm sense of style.

This type of competition with television leads nowhere. Not because critics tear these mediocre foreign films to shreds in their reviews, but because, as studies show, despite these films' box-office success, audiences are more and more sceptical of their enthusiasm for this pseudo-art; the ensuing contradiction is beginning to break down conservative stereotypes about audiences' mass behaviour.

The second, more fruitful path for the development of art under the influence of television is the development by each of the arts of its own capabilities aimed at satisfying the specific, differentiated needs of its audience, whose most general needs are already being satisfied by television. This path promises art the expansion of its content, genres, styles, and emotional range, although the audience for each individual

work may on the whole decline significantly. The fruitfulness of such a path is shown by the enormous success of many small-scale experimental studios, and semi-amateur theatres aimed at small audiences which have grown up recently in a number of socialist countries, including the Soviet Union. Although television is making the first path more and more futile, nevertheless television on the whole raises its audience's cultural potential, regardless of how contradictory this process may be or how many paradoxes may be hidden in its development; the second path is assisted by television, in that it liberates art from concerning itself with that part of its audience that prefers to sit in front of the television set, and from a number of other tasks that are more easily dealt with by television — tasks that only saddled cinema and other art-forms at a time when television did not yet exist.

Thus, for instance, television is the most convenient means for dealing with a number of practical tasks: newscasting, advertising, the diffusion of knowledge and standards, the popularising of literature, theatre, etc.

Television therefore liberates cinema and other cultural institutions from tasks on this level, assimilating the means for carrying out these tasks: newsreels, daily news broadcasts, popular scientific films, telecasts of performances in other media, etc. These tasks need the regularity and efficiency of the television screen, and they suffer less from the visual imperfections of the small screen. Those 'hybrids' that never quite took on cinema screen have fitted in very nicely on the television screen: films of plays, ballets, operas, concerts, etc.

However, once we have noted this functional redistribution of 'spheres of influence', we should also point out the polarisation of the aesthetic specifics of television and the other artistic media it reproduces.

In this respect it is interesting to compare television with cinematic biographical films and their adaptations of literary works. For instance, the Italian television film about Leonardo da Vinci that accompanied the Soviet film *Andrei Rublyov* on

television screens across the world, televised plays or serial adaptations (from the English *Forsyte Saga* to the Soviet *Boris Godunov*, directed by Anatoly Efros) should be compared with cinematic films like *A Nest of the Gentry* and *Uncle Vanya*, as well as a number of other successful cinematic interpretations of the literary classics. Television's striving (a general one for artists of various schools, talents, and countries) to create a faithful copy of the original work and maintain the viewer's impression that he is seeing a television interpretation, yet is learning something about the original, as well — whether it be literary or historic, something that exists beyond the screen, something objective. The film becomes an act of communication between the viewer and events or people existing beyond the screen; actors are intermediaries reporting back on a book or a moment in history, which in itself makes it possible to have various interpretations, approaches, and performances.

Cinema takes a different direction. Its goal is not to retain, but to 'eliminate' the literary or documentary original and convince its audience that this interpretation is the only one conceivable, i.e. to create an absolute, whole, self-enclosed world within the limits of capabilities. (Of course, it is still current to think that cinema is obliged to transform, 'squeeze', and 'overcome' the literary original due to the limitations on its footage, while TV is supposedly free of this 'defect' because of the regular, serial nature of its broadcasting, and is therefore able to retain not only the spirit but the letter of the original, as well. However, given equal footage, we more and more frequently see a tendency towards various types of adaptations — cinematic ones produce more variations, while television adaptations are more literal.)

The authorship principle shows itself differently in television and cinema, too: in cinema it has been liberated due to television's influence, which makes the screen a field of activity not only for actors and characters, but also directly for the author. On television the presence of the author or narrator makes



the production seem more a spontaneous act of communication and enhances the informational, publicistic capacities of the television screen. In cinema the appearance of a narrator or commentator on events would be an imitation of television. At some stage this would undoubtedly be useful, in that it opens up the possibility of 'intellectualising' the film; but it also increases the danger of ruining the film's integral, organic nature. This contradiction was dialectically 'removed' by the further development of cinema: when cinema was relieved of author's intrusion, it achieved a more individual vision, associative level, and intimacy in its visual language, and the striving to think and feel directly in pictures and shots was strengthened — in short, it led to a result directly opposed to that achieved in television.

Television has directly influenced the contemporary aesthetics of cinema by many other means. For instance, as we mentioned above, the syncretic structure of a programme absorbs more artistically diverse elements. For instance, the appearance of persons in modern dress on the operatic stage in the middle of a production of *Aida* would totally destroy the production's unity, but a television broadcast may include shots of the audience in the theatre or documental material included in the broadcast and this will only make the telecast more interesting.

The first circumstance significantly weakens all the traditional bans on mixing genres that inhibit formal experiments or attempts to produce 'hybrid' genres. We only have to recall the film *Spring Floods* (after Turgenev) made for television, a mixture of drama and ballet. This is not the place to discuss the merits of this experiment, we only wish to observe that this bold experiment could not have been available to such a large audience in any other medium, rather than just being an *in vitro* experiment. In cases like this, television urges cinema to enhance the specifics of its artistic thought, even though the liberated tendencies here strike out on a new road altogether. They lead to a new organic unity, but on a freer

creative level leading from 'reflection' to 'expression'.

The second circumstance (the fact that a programme can tolerate an accidental fusion of elements not directly associated with its main idea) affects film aesthetics in a direction that would seem directly opposed to the first direction. The link between the phenomenon that creates the image of reality on the television screen and the essence, which once upon a time created a mask, then an *emploi*, then a screen stereotype, suddenly became arbitrary and unique each time. The influence of television, therefore, has contributed to the destruction of stereotypes that previously dominated even documental cinema in one form or another, not to speak of fictional cinema, which has continued down the ages to adhere to the realistic evolution of art from mask to individual, from myth to documentalism, reflecting history's democratisation and humanisation. As a result, art has acquired a new realistic depth, has moved away from naturalism, and has reached a new summit of philosophical generalisation—yet without losing itself in abstractions.

Naturally, the aesthetic mutual influences between television and the other arts, above all cinema, are complex and contradictory. But if we turn to historical analogies, we see that the influences we have pointed out are fundamental.

During the early period of cinema's development, the theatre tried to imitate it, sensing it to be a competitor. This showed itself in the theatre's striving for outer photographic verisimilitude—right up to stage design with ceilings, and in its enthusiastic use of technical tricks. (However, this process was also dialectical: 'natural' theatre was not only a reaction against cinema, but in some ways its forerunner, for it prepared the audience to accept cinema, it was 'cinema without a screen', very much like the 'television without a television set' that we find today in a number of cinematic phenomena.) That degree of photographic verisimilitude that would have been natural and realistic in the cinema turned into naturalism in the theatre; mechanical imitation of cinema took theatre into a dead-end.

The way out of this crisis lay in another direction. Under cinema's influence, the theatre did not become more 'cinematic', but more 'theatrical', it became a more openly stylised spectacle, free of blindly imitating life. Moreover, the creative lessons learned from cinema helped the theatre to free itself of 'staginess', to become natural and lively in manner and in style.

Television today is affecting the development of modern cinematic aesthetics in a similar (and very ambiguous) manner. On the one hand, television has strengthened cinema's documentary traits and revealed the excessive theatricality of what, in comparison with the theatre, used to seem entirely natural. It is another matter altogether that at a certain stage cinema's reaction to this influence was imitative and lacking in creativity. However, having stimulated cinema to be more natural and closer to life, television also warned it away from naturalistic merging with the small screen.

Thus, an age-old truth can be observed in the relations between television and cinema and the other arts: each new means of communication affirms itself as being more functional, practical, and faithful in its reproductive capacities (of the content expressed in previously existing channels or real facts), i.e. superficially 'realistic' means distinguished by the clear dominance of the single element over the general, the fact over the essence, 'reflection' over 'expression'. Thus literature began — with the chronicle, the 'lives of the saints', and with folklore — thus began the cinema, and that is the way TV is also beginning. But, as the new system takes shape, the previous one is forced onto the more 'symbolic' level of deep and universal artistic generalisations, thus approaching an art that does not require that it be taken for reality. That is, art is made from the reproductive and informational systems.

This, then, is how television and cinema influence each other at the present moment. In socialist society they are creative allies, not enemies. In socialist society there neither is nor can be any competition between the mass media, which are under no

commercial pressure to win over the audience—whether television and cinema audiences, newspaper and magazine readers—to stir up consumer needs by any means possible in their chase after an audience, to manipulate people's undeveloped tastes and lowest feelings. All our country's mass media serves one goal only—the interest of society.

## THE SOVIET AUDIENCE

During a discussion about 'The Cinema and its Audience', which took place during the Fourth Moscow Film Festival, Italian director Giuseppe de Santis stressed the importance of cinema's mass audience, which sets it apart from the other arts, and said: 'I would change the subject of our discussion from "The Cinema and Its Audience" to "The Cinema Is Its Audience."'

This is no exaggeration. This is the way the situation stands. Films must find mass audiences. That is why it is impossible to speak of the phenomenon of the Soviet cinema without discussing the audience of this 'most important of all the arts'. The Soviet cinema audience has certain outstanding traits that set it apart from audiences in other countries. This chapter will discuss this subject — the cinema audience in the Soviet Union.

A society's economic basis is the foundation on which all of that society's values, dominant ideas and, of course, the figure of man himself as a social unit is based. The opposition between the socialist and capitalist world in the economic and political spheres inevitably also leads to opposition in their ideas and dominant world-views.

In analysing the basic features of 'the Soviet audience', we should proceed from the fact that the main difference between Soviet audiences and audiences in the capitalist world is their world-view. We should also proceed from the Marxist truth that a person's outlook is shaped by both objective circumstances and subjective factors.

In his report to the Twenty-Fourth Party Congress, L.I. Brezhnev said:

'The moral and political make-up of Soviet people is moulded by the entire socialist way of our life, by the entire course of affairs in society and, above all, by purposeful, persevering ideological and educational work by the Party, by all its organisations.

*'The formation of a communist world outlook in the broad mass of the people and their education in the spirit of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism are the core of all ideological and educational work by the Party.'* \*

The Soviet cinema is determined by the Marxist-Leninist world-view in two respects. Firstly, the creator of the film is guided in his creative activity by the communist world-view. Secondly, Soviet audiences appraise films through the prism of the communist world-view, as conditioned by the system of ideals which determine both the internal and external criteria for an audience's appraisal of films.

However, although we wish to stress the decisive role played by the audience's outlook on the world in appraising a film, we cannot say that reason alone determines a viewer's reaction to a film. In order to evaluate a film our aesthetic sense turns for advice to our reason. However, the 'rational' approach never has been and never will be the only means of reacting to the cinema. We should speak at this point about people's artistic taste, a fusion of rational and emotional factors. Nor should we forget that aesthetic habits and certain social-psychological factors influence the perception of aesthetic information.

The influence of the communist world-view on the basic traits of the Soviet viewer is a very complex question. This influence is both direct and indirect. Yet it is the decisive influence in terms of quality. The basis of a person's reaction to any given film is his outlook on life and the world.

The system of ideals (political, aesthetic, and moral) which indirectly influences a viewer's appraisal of a film is organically a part of his system of values (political, aesthetic, and moral), as well as the complex system of factors from the realm of social psychology.

While pointing out the underlying factor of the Soviet audience's world-view in determining their reaction to a film, and the importance of communist ideals, we must also stress

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\* *24th Congress of the CPSU, Moscow, 1971, p. 100.*

objective circumstances which determine the audience's reaction to the cinema.

The first circumstance is the social milieu and changes in this milieu that have taken place as our society developed, the basic features of our era as a whole (the technological revolution and its social consequences), which influence this phenomenon through the general social milieu, through our social system, and also the complex interaction between social groups which make up our social milieu.

In the final analysis, socialist production relations determine the fundamental principles of communist morality and relationships between people. They determine the value-judgments made in reacting to a film, against which the behaviour of the main characters in the film is measured, as well as the film's main ideas, which are measured against the communist ideals possessed by the Soviet viewer. All these factors explain why the Soviet viewer is orientated towards films with lofty civil qualities, films that affirm collectivist, humanist morality.

As cinema develops it continues to probe more and more deeply into the essence of society's social development. Cinematic genres continue to grow and cinema techniques become more and more perfected—all this also influences Soviet audiences, their values and preferences. Changing aesthetic standards, values, and psychological criteria cannot be examined without an analysis of qualitative changes in the structure of artistic information contained in the film under discussion.

Soviet audiences can only be understood if we examine the process of dialectical links which influence this phenomenon, including changes in the cinema itself, as well as the development of the press, radio, and especially television, changes in the social-demographic structure of society, and in the characteristics of the members of the audience—education, age, sex, profession, nationality, inclinations and tastes, and finally, their depth of knowledge about art, cinema in particular.

However, while realising that various categories of viewers exist, with different interests, demands, needs, attitudes to-



wards various types of films, reactions to these films depending on a number of factors which we mentioned earlier, this does not mean that individual aspects of the phenomenon of Soviet audiences can replace a general, monolithic concept of Soviet audiences, whose main qualitative feature is that they are Soviet, that they belong to the world's first socialist state.

The concept of Soviet audiences is based on the broader concept of the 'Soviet people'. In his General Report to the Twenty-Fourth Party Congress, L.I. Brezhnev said: '*A new historical community of people, the Soviet people, took shape in our country during the years of socialist construction. New, harmonious relations, relations of friendship and co-operation, were formed between the classes and social groups, nations and nationalities in joint labour, in the struggle for socialism and in the battles fought in defence of socialism. Our people are welded together by a common Marxist-Leninist ideology and the lofty aims of building communism.*'\*

This description of the Soviet people should be taken as the most important methodological principle for an analysis of the 'Soviet audience'.

Interest in the cinema in the Soviet Union is high, and this is independent of the film-goer's age, sex, or educational level. A number of studies have shown convincingly that interest in the cinema increases as the viewers' educational level rises. For instance, 96.8 per cent of people with specialised secondary education and 97.9 per cent of students in institutions of higher learning categorize themselves as 'very interested' or 'interested' in cinema.

Interest in the cinema is very high in all groups with professional qualifications. Men and women show a nearly equal interest in both cinema and television films.

Indicators of a universal interest in cinema should not be seen as absolute, of course. But sociological studies make it possible to clarify cinema's role and place in man's cultural

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\* 24th Congress of the CPSU, p. 92.

life, and to determine the correlation between cinema production and people's cultural needs.

It turns out that today's cinema fully corresponds to the needs and interests of every third film-goer. Nearly one in two viewers felt that the cinema partially reflects the cultural needs of Soviet man. This is a very high percentage, if we remember that less than 3 per cent of film-goers in major industrial centres, provincial capitals and small towns in our country feel that the cinema does not reflect their cultural needs.

Studies of cinema audiences have shown a certain contradiction in appraisals of films. A positive answer could not be obtained from 15-20 per cent of those who answered the questionnaires in large cities. Nearly 40 per cent of film-goers were not fully satisfied with the cinematic repertoire. However, this contradiction shows the growing cultural needs of Soviet man and the increasingly sophisticated structure of his leisure time and varied interests. After all, sports, reading, theatre, and music occupy an important place in a man's leisure time.

The Soviet cinema audience has a lively interest in art, goes to the movies frequently, is very choosy about the programme, and is very demanding and critical. The majority of the audience treats film as an art, not just an entertainment. This is the reason for their demands for a thematically-varied repertoire and a high artistic level.

The Soviet cinema audience has definitely developed tastes, and knows what concrete films it wants to see: more than 70 per cent of cinema-goers choose the films they want to see, rather than just going to anything available. According to facts furnished by the studies, every second film-goer knows what he wants to see when he goes to the movies, and only 6 per cent go regardless of what they are going to see.

As age and educational level increase, so does the element of conscious choice on the part of the viewer. Aesthetic satisfaction occupies a leading place among motives for going to the movies: every third viewer named this factor as the main one in choosing which film they want to see. The desire to

acquire knowledge competes with this motive for first place — especially knowledge about people and their relations, i.e. cinema's 'human knowledge' function.

Alongside the desire to receive aesthetic satisfaction and acquire knowledge there is also the hedonistic motive, the specific weight of which would be equal to 25-30 per cent. We believe that there is no reason for these motivations to be in opposition to each other, for they express the complex, dynamic variety of viewers' preferences. In any case, viewers give an equal rating to cinema's aesthetic and recreational functions.

We should point out that even when the viewer examines cinema as an entertainment, a means of filling up leisure time, he nonetheless rejects it categorically as 'pure entertainment'. This explains Soviet audiences' interest in fictional films based on real events (52.5 per cent). An insignificant part of the audience prefers films with purely imaginative subjects (6.8 per cent). As a rule, this part of the audience is made up of people with a low educational level.

This analysis is sufficiently accurate, for the consciousness with which viewers choose the films they want to see coincided with their attitude towards television; the control question, 'What, in your opinion, is a good film?' on the whole supported the accuracy of the conclusions drawn. 31.5 per cent of film and television viewers believe that a good film is one from which something new can be learned. Nearly every third viewer believes that a good film provides instructive examples of actions, stimulates one to reflect on life, shows real, significant feelings, has characters that awaken our interest, and makes the viewer share their thoughts and sympathise with them.

Audiences are very demanding about acting standards, and expect films to be skilfully directed and photographed. Very few viewers think that exotic surroundings, unusual characters, and extraordinary events are necessary for a good film. Only 12 per cent of the audience expressed its preference for films of this type. A low proportion also expressed

preference for films that make you 'feel sad, cry, or feel good when there's a happy ending', although the percentage of the audience which regards melodrama as the criteria of a good film is only 21.6 per cent of urban audiences and 24.4 per cent of non-urban audiences, according to our study.

A film's spectacular qualities or captivating subject are regarded differently by audiences with different educational backgrounds.

As the audience's educational background increases, so does the curve of its wish to receive aesthetic satisfaction. This motive is the main one for people with a higher education.

Audiences demand the truth about life from the cinema, and only that truth that can be artistically embodied on the screen. 40 per cent of the audience believe that in a film 'everything should be just like it is in life', 47.1 per cent make allowances for 'a bit of invention', and only 3.6 per cent believe that everything should be invented in a film 'because that's what the movies are for'.

The motives that go into choosing a film, corresponding to age, sex, education demonstrate that apart from the unity of needs, interests, and preferences formed in socialist society, viewers are also differentiated according to whether they are urban-dwellers or not, i.e. according to demographic indicators.

The high regard that the Soviet mass audience has for cinema is shown not only in their general attitude towards the cinema and in their high demands for cinema, but in their concrete evaluation of individual Soviet and foreign films, their acceptance or non-acceptance of films that touch on deep social problems, personal problems, and entertaining films, films with pseudo-problems that are resolved in a stereotyped manner.

The Soviet audience's approach is especially perceptible in analysing their reaction to 'complex' films with unusual stylistics, which reflect complicated conflicts, films which demand a particular approach.

In an interview with *Soviet Screen* magazine in 1969, director Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky said that the main goal of his work is to 'disclose man's new potential, to penetrate into his consciousness, express his complex feelings by cinematic means.'

The artistic embodiment of this aesthetic credo was Konchalovsky's film *A Lovers' Romance*, based on a script by E. Grigoryev, which was released in 1974. How did audiences react to what this film had to say?

Even before *A Lovers' Romance* was released, many viewers had a good conception of it. The film's director discussed his plans in the press and asked readers which actors they would like to play the leading roles; later on, reports on the filming were also available. The journal *Iskusstvo kino* published Evgeni Grigoryev's literary script. Scenes from *A Lovers' Romance* were shown on television in 'Cinema Panorama'. And finally, the newspapers reported that the film had been awarded the 'Crystal Globe', the main award at the Nineteenth International Film Festival in Karlovy Vary.

Critics took a lively interest in the film. It produced many contradictory views. An analysis of newspaper and magazine reviews supports the opinion expressed in many letters from viewers—*A Lovers' Romance* left no one indifferent, it was discussed, argued about, accepted or rejected, admired or criticised, but not ignored. The poetess Margarita Aliger wrote that this film dealt with important human feelings experienced by the most ordinary people, people we brush shoulders with everyday. 'I must admit, however,' she concluded, 'that other people may have entirely different opinions about it, that they may like other things than what caught my attention. Some people may not like it at all, on the other hand, and I shall not try to change their views. This is entirely natural for a modern, memorable, very original film.'

Most critics saw *A Lovers' Romance* as an important film. The *Pravda* reviewer wrote that 'This film-romance discloses the world of young people today in an original way, stimulates

us to philosophical reflection, and helps the audience to look at themselves and the people around them in a new way.' The reviewer pointed out that a film, like any other work of art, is not just a mirror-like reflection of life, and that the polemics that had grown up around *A Lovers' Romance* show that the film-makers' search had been fruitful. The controversy it aroused showed that the film was interesting and significant, no matter how one may evaluate its individual aspects.

Another film critic saw the film's emotional strength in the fact that it praised love as the highest value, in accordance with the best traditions of world classics and the principles of socialist realism. 'The makers of *A Lovers' Romance* have written a hymn to love, while fully realising that its ways are as complex as life itself.'

Many critics suggested that *A Lovers' Romance* offers a fundamental artistic argument against those representatives of bourgeois cinema who regard love as an amusing anachronism of the distant past, incompatible with our times.

Not a single critic expressed any doubt about the fact that *A Lovers' Romance* is a film in praise of love, a hymn to love. Nevertheless, some reviewers polemicised with the film-makers about the character of their hymn. One writer quoted a girl who said in a quiet voice after the film: 'I'm embarrassed to say this, but why should they turn love inside out for everyone to see? Love is a sacred thing...' Obviously, the writer shares this opinion. But it follows from this that, if love is an intimate feeling, it can never be a subject to be shown, and therefore not an object for artistic examination. Yet art's great strength lies in the fact that by depicting man's most intimate, most sacred feelings, it can make them belong to everyone capable of feeling, and can make people capable of feeling.

None of the critics ever denied the film-makers' right to artistic searchings. Yet when the object of their searchings appeared, some critics suddenly decided that they had abused this right. 'The director's fantasy got out of hand and the

audience stopped believing in what was occurring, stopped believing the director's ideas and thoughts,' wrote a reviewer in a Baku newspaper.

But what are the criteria of a sense of measure? Art is always allegorical. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky consciously stresses this in his film. This was the reason for the blank verse and songs that some critics found out of place, as well as showing the film crew on screen, and the symbolical figure, the Trumpeter.

*A Lovers' Romance* then can be said to have produced lively discussion among people who have a professional interest in cinema. This shows certain tangible difficulties in the reception of the film by the mass audience. Nonetheless, it is not a film's stylistics, nor the director's and cameraman's tricks that determine a film's success or lack of success. Sociological studies carried out on this film's reception show that the success of *A Lovers' Romance* was ensured above all by the phenomenon of the Soviet audience.

Sociological studies made it possible to determine the attitude of viewers within various social-demographic categories to this film.

There were several sources at the sociologist's disposal for analysing audience attitudes towards this film.

Firstly, during the television programme 'Cinema Panorama', which was broadcast in November, 1974, several excerpts from *A Lovers' Romance* were shown. Viewers were then requested to appraise the film as a whole and its individual episodes. Nearly two thousand letters were received in response by the television studios. Many of the letter-writers did not limit themselves to just giving their reaction to the film, but tried to analyse it in depth. In January, 1975, 'Cinema Panorama' summed up viewer response to the film. Secondly, attitudes towards this film can be gauged by the traditional competition organised by *Soviet Screen*. Thirdly, the Research Division into Problems of the Mass Media and Film Sociology within the Institute for the Theory and History of Cinema carried out a sociological survey in June-July, 1975 to

determine reception of the film by audiences in a number of Soviet cities. These statistics furnish us with an idea of how audiences received and evaluated the film.

Most of these letters praised *A Lovers' Romance*. Suffice it to say that 77.5 per cent rated the film 'good' and 'very good', 16.5 per cent termed it 'mediocre'. A very small percentage of the writers (2.5 per cent) did not like the film at all, and some viewers did not want to express their attitude towards the film.

What tendencies can be seen in analysing these letters?

Most of them pointed out that *A Lovers' Romance* made an impression on everyone, and that discussions about the film, its good and bad points, extended beyond the auditorium of the theatre.

The audience's age had an interesting influence on reactions to the film. Young people — from 14 to 25 years of age — reacted most favourably to the film.

*A Lovers' Romance* is a film about today's youth, about their lives, their strivings, joys and sorrows. The film-makers had young people in mind when they made their film. It is only natural, therefore, that in analysing the film we should note how young audiences reacted to the film — whether they accepted it as a whole, its symbols, its sometimes highly stylised visual aspect. As the letters received by 'Panorama' show, young audiences reacted much more favourably to the film than did older audiences.

The next stage was a competition held annually by *Soviet Screen* magazine. Statistics from this survey about *A Lovers' Romance* showed that it was rated one of the ten best films of the year. 78 per cent of those who responded rated it 'outstanding' or 'good', i.e. the same percentage furnished by the letters sent to 'Panorama'. At this time, *Soviet Screen* published several of the most enthusiastic and most negative reactions to the film. The same opinions were expressed in letters sent to 'Panorama'. Let us look at a few of them. A viewer from Kharkov wrote: 'I am retired. I am 67 years old. But love is



such a beautiful feeling that, despite by advanced age, this film stirred me deeply.'

A schoolteacher from Kharkov wrote: 'I liked the film, but more than that — I was stunned and shaken by it. What incredible skill went into its making! If I were teaching a class now, I would tell my students that this film is a profound, integral, and very pure work of art!' A student in the history department of the Moscow Pedagogical Institute: 'The film was marvellous A very unusual, very emotional film. I am not afraid to say that it is very romantic. I am very happy that I experienced and understood it. For two and a half hours I lived the heroes' complex, wonderful lives. I was very happy for Sergei, who was able to find himself and enjoy life again! I wish to thank everyone who took part in making this film.'

We could quote many other such responses to this film.

But there were also letters expressing the opposite reaction to the film.

An engineer from Leningrad wrote: 'Frankly, it made a very negative impression on me. I wanted to get up and leave the theatre from the very beginning of the film. All the scenes are somehow unnatural, hysterical, excessively emotional. There's not a grain of truth in it, and the plot is banal.' A student from Vilnius summed up her reaction to the film in these words: 'I didn't like anything about the film. I couldn't see it as a hymn to love, as some reviewers called it.' A Moscow office-worker wrote: 'When I see films like this, I somehow think right away that the director and script-writer have tried on purpose to show how clever they are. Just let the audience try to figure it all out! And so people are afraid to admit that they haven't understood it, to look as if they are behind the times, and so they praise it, just like in the story about the emperor's new clothes.'

The statistics and quotations mentioned above allow us to conclude that *A Lovers' Romance* was regarded as an unusual, landmark-setting film by most of its audience. Its unusual qualities produced sharp discussion about the film, and people often had directly opposing views on it. But, it is significant

that there were no letters saying that the film was unnecessary, that it posed difficult, but pointless problems, or that audiences want to relax when they go out to the movies and forget their problems. The letters discussed whether the film had been successful in conveying its main idea to the audience, and whether it had an emotional and intellectual impact or not.

We also tried by means of sociological studies to determine how audiences reacted to the range of human feelings shown in the film, whether they accepted the way they were shown as truthful or not. *A Lovers' Romance*, after all, contains a great deal of symbolism: the alternating use of colour or black-and-white film, dialogue in blank verse in some scenes, etc.

Sociological studies and analysis of viewers' letters showed convincingly that despite these and other symbolical devices, which were responsible for the differences in opinion about the film, nevertheless the majority of the audience felt the film depicted life truthfully. The film's symbolic aspect did not prevent the majority of viewers from either understanding it or rating it very highly.

More than half of those people surveyed by the magazine (60.5 per cent) said that the film depicted life truthfully, and only 17 per cent felt that it distorted life, while the remaining percentage did not express any opinion.

As we can see, the film's form did not obscure its meaning to most of its audience, and many viewers regarded it as a good expression of its content.

As an example, how did the audience feel about the use of both colour and black-and-white film in one movie? Most of those who answered the survey felt this was done to emphasise the change in Sergei Nikitin's attitude towards life. 'As long as his love is alive, colour film is used', we read in one questionnaire. 'Love gave all the colours of the rainbow to Sergei's life. When he lost this love, everything around him became grey,' another says. And other questionnaires expressed the same opinions in one way or another. Many said that this device was very successful in the way it emphasised

the main character's feelings. When colour film was used again at the end, this was seen as meaning that Sergei had found life and love again.

The dialogue in verse in some of the film's scenes is another symbolic device. How did audiences react to this? One third of the audience accepted it without qualification, another third did not entirely accept it, and a fifth of the viewers were categorically against such a device, while the remainder expressed no opinion. As can be seen, audiences' reaction to this device was somewhat more restrained than their reaction to the use of alternating colour and black-and-white film.

Viewers tried to justify this device in the film in their letters. They said that blank verse was an organic part of the film's general artistic texture, and served to emphasise what the authors had to say. 'I found it interesting that the film includes verse. In my opinion, this adds to the film a certain lofty, lyrical quality', wrote a music teacher from Tula. 'The film deals with life truthfully. It isn't disturbed by the fact that the main characters speak in verse and sing. This lends a certain very special charm to *A Lovers' Romance*. After all, every man sings in his soul, but not everyone decides to open up the poetry in his soul to the world, people are afraid and ashamed, they don't want to seem old-fashioned and funny. Yet the main characters in this film are not afraid, and we should thank them for this,' said a Moscow student. 'I liked it when the characters spoke in blank verse. At first I didn't even notice, because they sounded so natural. Their thoughts and feelings are so elevated and beautiful that there can be no doubt about the sincerity behind these unusual phrases', wrote a high-school girl from Kiev.

Music is another organic part of the texture of the narrative. The songs are sung not by the film's main characters, but are on the sound track; they can be regarded as lyrical digressions, but digressions that make both the audience and the film-makers reflect on the feelings depicted on the screen.

Many of those who believe that the film showed a truthful

depiction of life, nonetheless pointed out that it contains some scenes that are somewhat forced and make it difficult to understand what is going on. However, those of the audience who did not accept the stylised nature of the film nonetheless felt that the basic conception corresponded to what they believe true life is.

However, this was not the only factor that accounts for the praise given to the film. Audiences noted the social significance of the problems depicted. One out of two viewers stressed this aspect of the film.

What are the important problems in life that audiences particularly picked out in the film? Foremost was 'love for one's country', which one in four viewers mentioned, then there was 'carrying out one's military duty', which one in three mentioned, and lastly there was 'the ability to understand other people', which one in two viewers noted. Many others mentioned friendship, motherly love, fidelity in love, and the ability to overcome grief.

These facts should, of course, be interpreted correctly. If, for instance, one in four viewers named 'love for one's country' as the most important theme, this does not mean that these people felt there were no other themes in the film, or that they were insignificant.

The film's main characters presented the main ideas behind the film. How did audiences react to them, what feelings did they have about their thoughts and actions, what attracted them and what did they find off-putting?

Nearly 60 per cent of the audience expressed themselves about Sergei Nikitin. One in three believed that his main character traits were his resolution, courage, will-power, and bravery, and nearly as many viewers also said that he was faithful in love, to his duty, and to his homeland, that he was noble, honest, purposeful; one in ten pointed out his ability to overcome his grief, and some noted his serious nature, kindness and warm-heartedness, his depth, sincerity, tenderness, and inner purity.

These, then, are the character traits which made Sergei Nikitin a hero of the time in the audience's opinion.

Tanya produced most mixed reactions. Only 45.5 per cent of those who answered the questionnaire expressed an opinion about her. They pointed out as her character traits her ability to love, her gentleness, tenderness—then her sincerity, love of life, femininity, and finally, her romantic nature. Other positive character traits were her devotion, kindness, spontaneity, and restraint. However, more than half of the viewers who analysed Tanya as a person had a negative opinion of her. They called her frivolous, not serious enough, then pointed out her inconstancy, her silliness, and some mentioned her hysterical nature, her coquettishness, and said she was weak.

What did audiences like about the film?

Above all, they liked the way it showed love and the main characters' inner world (30 per cent), then they liked its sense of poetry, the romantic, and its stylistic originality (20 per cent), and finally, the way it dealt with young people's basic problems (18 per cent). In addition, they pointed out the outstanding photography and musical score.

The responses given to this question were really very interesting. A very small proportion of the audience were attracted by the plot twists. The majority placed this somewhere at the end of other considerations. In the minds of Soviet audiences, films have long since stopped being just a show.

And so, *A Lovers' Romance* is far from being a simple film, and yet mass audiences praised it, although not always without qualification. Factors such as the social-demographic distinctions between film-goers had a significant influence on the way they responded to it. Young people liked the film because it was directed at young people and because of a number of other factors. The film-makers caught young people's romantic yearning, their yearning for free, uninhibited behaviour, spontaneous feelings, openness, and their rejection of undisguised didacticism. The portion of the audience that liked the film are of the age when love, and one's fidelity or lack of fidelity to

it, is of particular concern to them. The love story told in the film has great emotional significance to them. A more balanced, rational approach favoured by older audiences would be alien to them—and it was these older viewers who gave a lower rating to the film, as we have seen.

We can confidently say that Soviet audiences showed their very essence in their reactions to and evaluations of this film—to seek for and find in any given film not only personal implications, but social ones as well.

Let us take one more film. This film's content is not simple and has produced a variety of opinions and evaluations from different categories of viewers both in the Soviet Union and abroad, a film with an entirely different subject than *A Lovers' Romance*, and let us see how the Soviet mass audience reacted to it, and what it revealed about the very character of this audience. We shall draw on facts and figures from a number of sociological studies carried out on this film and analysis of the mass of letters written by film-goers to newspaper and magazine offices. We are going to discuss a film by that outstanding Soviet director, actor, and writer, Vassily Shukshin, *The Red Snow-Ball Tree*.

Viewers of different ages, sexes, educational backgrounds, social categories, and social activity gave high praise to *The Red Snow-Ball Tree*, which told memorably of the complex life of an ex-thief. However, viewers were not unanimous in their opinions of the film as a whole, its individual episodes, the main characters, and the conclusions drawn in the film. In fact, opinions were directly opposed on this film. Nonetheless, both positive and negative opinions on the film merged into one whole. They clearly showed the characteristics of audiences in the new socialist society who place lofty requirements on the most mass-orientated of the arts—cinema.

The general acclaim that greeted *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* was supported by a questionnaire on which more than 80 per cent of the viewers termed the film 'successful' and 'very

successful'. Nearly half of those interviewed has seen the film two or more times, and 63.2 per cent were prepared to see it again.

Many viewers expressed their satisfaction with the film at the end of the questionnaire, and praised Shukshin's many-sided talent as the script-writer, director, and chief actor. Here are several excerpts from the questionnaires:

*'The Red Snow-Ball Tree is the best Soviet film in the past five or ten years. Its director is intelligent and honest...'*

*'The Red Snow-Ball Tree is an outstanding film. When you are watching it, you forget that it is fiction. Life itself passes before your eyes...'*

Facts furnished by the questionnaire show that most of the audience felt the film adequately expressed the author's conception, that it was a highly realistic work that raised major problems in life. The topical nature of the problems it discussed was noted by more than half of those who answered the questionnaire (answers to the question about the film's good points: 'It makes you think more deeply about life', 'it raises life's important problems').

There was also a significant group of viewers, however, who saw the film as a 'psychological story about the love of two ordinary people whose paths in life had been difficult'.

*'This film was excellent. We should see more films of this sort, about people's lives, their joys and sorrows.'*

*'This is a splendid film, filled with humour and sorrow, and it will long remain in my memory.'*

One in two viewers replied that they wanted to see the film again. Audiences also praised highly the film's objective artistic qualities. Its success in this respect (and here it is measured in terms of the number of 'successful' and 'very successful' ratings it received) was nearly one-hundred per cent. But some viewers felt it was 'mediocre' in that its educative influence was perhaps not correctly formulated. The artistic

and realistic qualities of the film gave no cause for doubt, however. Alongside the film's presentation of fundamental problems, viewers also gave a high rating to its realism. 55.2 per cent of those questioned stressed that 'the film delved deeply into the world of human feelings', 28 per cent said it was 'highly realistic', 20 per cent noted that it 'conveyed the national characteristics of the main characters very well', 35 per cent felt that 'the film expanded the audience's experience of life'. The percentage of viewers who only responded to the film's plot and 'exotic' side was small — 13 per cent.

The enormous success that *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* enjoyed among the audience cinema critics, historians, and reviewers is explained in various ways. Some people thought it a result of the novelty of the subject itself for the Soviet cinema, its similarity to a detective story. The great success of one of the first sound films, *Road to Life* (1932), the plot of which resembled *The Red Snow-Ball Tree*, was also recalled.

Others focused attention on the film's melodramatic situations, seeing this as the reason for its popularity with audiences. But most of those who wrote about *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* regarded 'its deeply realistic depiction of life' as decisive in its popularity.

In conformance with reviewers' observations about *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* which pointed out various levels of reception of the film, we can hypothetically set up three basic groups of viewers. One of them is most receptive to the film's plot, as could be expected. The story has a semi-detective flavour, telling of the life of a much-convicted thief who decides to break with the criminal world.

Another portion of the viewers saw the film's melodramatic qualities as its most appealing side, the experiences of its main characters, the tragic quality of their destinies, which made one sympathise with them.

However, the fullest perception of the work takes in those aspects of its content which reflect life's major problems, problems connected with spiritual values which make up the



basis of our lives. According to Shukshin, these were 'the most essential, profound aspects' of the film.

What then does our analysis of letters from viewers and the sociological studies quoted here show?

In viewers' opinions, this film was a passionate summons to struggle for the good of man. Most of the letter-writers felt that more films of this type should be made. L. from Murmansk speaks for himself and his friends when he says: 'We think there should be more films like *The Red Snow-Ball Tree*, and we give it an A+.' E.N. from Kalinin expresses the same opinion when she writes: 'We liked the film. We have a lot of films about labour and our homeland, but we need films about this side of life, too.' V., a lathe-operator from the Rustavi metallurgical factory, says: 'This film deals with important questions in life, questions about Soviet man, his soul, character, love, and hatred for whatever prevents him from living and perfecting himself.' Other opinions were: 'This film shows that even a man who has stumbled can find his place in life.' 'A man who has lost the right path can always set himself right and find his place in life if he wants this, although this film cannot — of course — be accused of smoothing over life's problems. It does not conceal the difficulties of this re-education, but places the accent on something else — each person's civil duty.'

Let us quote a few more opinions which can be seen as summing-up the argument about one of the film's main ideas:

'This film is a summons to all people to take part in educating those who have lost their way, those who have not found their true path in life, showing that this cannot be done by one or two counsellors in prison.' 'Faith in man, even a man who has made mistakes in life.'

'The struggle against crime, and the reforming of people not only by isolating them, but above all by labour, the influence of those around them — honest, conscientious people. Lyuba, her family, and her relatives do not turn away from the thief, do not lock up their possessions and their homes, but try'

to bring him back to the right path by a healthy atmosphere of life and labour, without any moralising.'

'I wanted to discuss man's responsibility towards the land that gave him life. All of us living today shall have to bear the responsibility for everything that occurs on earth. For the good and the bad. For lies, dishonesty, a parasitical way of life, cowardice, and disloyalty—we shall have to pay for this in full. This is what *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* is about'.—That was Shukshin's credo.

This film is rich in ideas. It does not disclose everything in itself at first glance to even a sophisticated viewer. So it can be no surprise that certain of the film's themes, including the most important ones, were not immediately reflected in viewers' answers.

Many people noted 'intolerance of pretence' as one of Egor Prokudin's most basic character traits. Yet the development of this trait, the theme of 'celebration' that Egor is searching for, a lofty, extraordinary mood—also a very important theme in the film—was hardly mentioned in viewer responses.

Shukshin spoke about the seemingly-hardened criminal, Egor Prokudin, in these words: 'What could touch his heart? Only an encounter with kindness and goodness. A human response from another person.'

A large portion of the audience correctly understood the film's deeply humane conception. When asked what important problems in life the film brought up, many viewers answered in detail, not only pointing out the problems themselves, but also outlining their direct link with life:

'Lyuba's purity of soul and trust in her family motivated Egor Prokudin to become honest, and he broke with the criminal world.'

In the author's conception, Egor was a powerful, unusual man, and he felt his tragedy all the more deeply, for he demands a great deal of life and of himself. His complexity was correctly understood by many letter-writers.

‘You can not ignore his positive character traits: his kindness, inner purity, principled stand, intelligence, talent, nobility, responsiveness, and love for people’, writes D. from the town of Podolsk.

‘Egor is not just a thief, but a man with a soul capable of subtle feelings, proud and injured. Egor dreamed of a “celebration” of the soul, and did not know what happiness was. This is his major tragedy. It turns out that this “celebration” does not require much: labour, the land, birch-trees, and a person who understands and believes in you. Yet this is so much that it takes a whole lifetime to find it. This is a film about the human soul, and about the fact that man’s inner self needs a “celebration”. Otherwise, there is no point in living’, wrote V. from Ust-Kamenogorsk in his letter. Many letter-writers also remarked on Shukshin’s performance in the role of Egor Prokudin.

The figure of Lyuba Baikaloova is just as important as that of Egor Prokudin for the film’s general conception — in artistic terms and in terms of content. The letter-writers stressed that this character, played by actress Lydia Fedoseeva, could be counted among the most splendid examples of women to be found in Russian literature and art. This is what T. from Moscow writes at the end of her letter: ‘Many thanks to Lydia Fedoseeva for her profound portrayal of Lyuba Baikaloova. It was she, first and foremost, who saw Prokudin as a person. Lyuba is an inwardly rich figure. Kindness is a marvellous human trait, especially when it comes from the very heart.’

All the letter-writers agreed that Lyuba Baikaloova is an unusual figure. But Lydia Fedoseeva also succeeds in showing by means of many deft touches that Lyuba is like anyone else in her milieu. She is amazing and unique, yet typical at the same time.

Lyuba’s parents (her father was played by I. Ryzhov and her mother by M. Skvortsova) are very much the same. E.K. from Alma-Ata says this about them: ‘Looking at

Lyuba's parents, you understand clearly how good the people are, how great is their inextinguishable faith in goodness.'

And so audiences saw the wisdom and humanity of the kind old man, whose age-old peasant caution did not prevent him from finally taking his daughter's side and approving her choice.

Major art requires major efforts on the part of its viewers, readers, listeners, a heightened activity of their critical powers. Reviewers of *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* focused their attention on a very curious contradiction: despite the general acclaim which greeted the film, it also produced a fairly large number of critical remarks, not only incidental, but of fundamental importance. This is understandable. A truly great work of art, in addition to its other virtues, is important in that it produces a more active reaction from its audience than does an ordinary film, orientating its viewers to be more independent in their judgement of the problems raised, problems that are of fundamental importance for everyone's life. True, not every viewer can understand the content and complex stylistics of this film, but we can say with confidence that *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* was understood by the broad audiences. The exigent Soviet audience responded to Shukshin's film as a major work of art, forceful in its realism, bold and profound in its disclosure of life's fundamental problems, and affirming our society's spiritual values.

The film's outstanding qualities stimulated the audience to think more creatively, discuss the film, and exchange opinions which inevitably vary widely, and thereby acts to help audiences absorb its content after viewing. This general rule is fully demonstrated by Shukshin's *The Red Snow-Ball Tree*.

Letters from viewers who hold more negative views of the film's events and main characters do not mean that its artistic qualities are in question, but simply that they do not agree with the author's views on the events and people depicted. These letters mean that the film has hit the audience in a sensitive spot.

While terming *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* as a 'story about the complex "remaking" of an ex-criminal', some viewers could not accept all the plot twists and the treatment of certain problems. The point of view of this portion of the audience is expressed in the following remark on a questionnaire: 'I don't think a film like this is needed... The acting is magnificent, but I didn't like the fact that the main character was doomed. If you make a film about an ex-convict, you should show how he becomes a full member of society again and goes on living and working, with nothing to be ashamed of.'

Some of those who responded praised the truthfulness and profound treatment of reality in the film, yet pointed out several defects—in their opinion—in terms of the film's educative influence:

'They should have been more restrained in showing scenes that depict an idle life and criminals, for instance, the party at the waiter's, Egor's murder, and the revenge.'

'...You didn't really have to show the scene in the prison club; long-haired teenagers soak up these sort of scenes like sponges.'

It is significant that the scenes most criticised by audiences were those of the party at the waiter's flat, and the gang's meeting place, although in artistic terms they could hardly be classified as weak.

Audiences' decisive rejection of these scenes is a result of their real-life context and what viewers regard as an erroneous approach from the educative point of view, one of cinema's functions. Moreover, although introducing these scenes would seem justified in terms of the plot and the main characters, the film as a whole and the author's realism as he reflects on life makes 'hot' scenes like these artistically inconsistent within the structure of the film.

One viewer who only rated this film as 'successful' writes: 'The scenes of the party at the waiter's flat, the gang's meeting place, and Egor's murder did not correspond to real life. If these scenes were a bit simpler and true to life the film would

be excellent.' It would be hard not to agree with this judgement.

Some viewers and reviewers have praised the way *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* depicts life, but have pointed out that in educative terms the film might have a negative influence on some segments of the audience. In principle, fears of this type have some basis. A sober attempt has to be made to evaluate the real capacities of the audience, which is very different in many respects—in terms of experience of life and aesthetic comprehension, above all. These factors explain why many people interviewed were in disagreement with the film's ending. Many of them were people who in one way or another are connected with education.

Rating the film as 'mediocre', one viewer explained his reasons this way: 'This film shows how a criminal goes to his doom. It should have shown how he is rehabilitated, his spiritual growth, and how he is going to labour for the good of society. What this film shows is that even when a man comes out of prison, he'll be killed anyway.'

Another viewer also criticised the film for showing that 'having once been part of the criminal world, Egor can't get away from it'.

There are sharp differences on this question between men and women: 70 per cent of male viewers approved the ending. Among the female part of the audience, the ending was accepted by 60 per cent. We can conclude from this that women give more importance to the educative function of art, inasmuch as they have a more direct and concrete relation to this question.

But let us return to the letters.

Some viewers do not feel that a man like Egor Prokudin should occupy a central place in a film. 'A hardened con-man should not be made the main character of a film and advertised across the country.'

Arguments should be presented against this point of view, and as a general conclusion it should be regarded as inaccurate.

The main character himself, Egor Prokudin, also produced some disagreement among viewers. Letter-writers who did not

like the film said: 'What kind of hero is this — an ex-convict? The whole film idealises criminals.' M. from Tomsk asks in a letter: 'Why is the film's hero a hardened thief who had caused so much grief to his own mother and other people?' O. from Saratov held the same opinion: 'A man who has been convicted seven times is no longer a man. He has been totally poisoned by the atmosphere of thieves and prison, he cannot have a soul left after so many years of inner uncleanness. Yet he is the main character in a film. Why?' A student named Irina from Ulan-Ude writes: 'The centre of this film is occupied by a thief who has lived on other people's backs. Everyone else has been building, and he has been stealing. Why? "Comrade Prokudin" — the hero of a film?' G.I. from Kaluga Region writes: 'I was particularly disturbed by the scene showing the convicts singing. Why? To make people feel compassion for them?'

A schoolteacher from the town of Brody near Lvov also expresses her dissatisfaction on this score: 'The best songs by Nekrasov and Esenin are given to drunks or hardened convicts to sing.'

We have to admit that opinions of this type are in the distinct minority. Film critics did not share this view, which is prejudiced and unfair. There is no good reason to say, for instance, that Egor Prokudin is 'totally poisoned' by thievery and prison. The film shows that he is not like this, that is the main point. These viewers are not sufficiently humane in saying that such a man can never find his way back to an honest life. This is not only debatable, it is simply not true. Nonetheless, we can understand many film-goers' active non-acceptance of Egor. The film is not just about some theoretical situation, but about occurrences in our everyday lives, occurrences that prevent people from contributing to the country's general welfare. This is one of the reasons for the negative responses to the film — viewers' fears that the film might not have the right educative influence. And of course, their fears are not entirely groundless.

But some letter-writers rejected the film on other grounds, very different from those we have just discussed.

V. from a town in the province of Volgograd writes: 'This film makes the criminal world, rather than the heroic labour of our people, seem romantic.' M. from a town near Lvov echoes this view when he writes: 'This film gives us nothing that would help us improve our knowledge of man, his life and labour in Soviet society.' A student from the Teachers' Training College in Drogobych writes: 'We should make films that praise Soviet men, Communists who struggle for Leninist ideas.' A people's judge from the town of Arseniev, G., observed: 'Prokudin never really left the criminal world. The problem of rehabilitation remains unsolved.'

Some letter-writers could not accept the film's tragic ending. T. from Vorkuta writes: 'By ending the film this way, the director wiped out the work of our judicial and penal system.' This same view was expressed by a number of other viewers. G. from Kursk noted: 'The film's ending—Egor's murder and Pyotr's revenge—is the main defect in the film's basic conception.' Y. from Alma-Ata expresses his dissatisfaction with Pyotr's action in these terms: 'Evil was punished and the whole gang wiped out. But this is also alien to our society. It is made to look as though lynch law is stronger than our just laws, which are capable of dealing with criminals; and so the film shows Soviet laws and the people who carry out justice as unable to deal with criminals.'

And so audiences either accept or reject *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* for various reasons. This is probably the case with any talented work of art: each person sees and finds in it what is closest to him and examines corners of his soul of which the author would not have even dreamed. This is the underlying reason for the variety of reactions even within the framework of the audience's general attitude towards the film. None of the letter-writers had remained indifferent to this film. Two-thirds of those who shared their opinions with us praised the film



without qualification. Their letters demonstrate that the film was received as a genuine work of art.

The critical approach of Soviet cinema audiences to certain details of the plot in *The Red Snow-Ball Tree* and their interpretation of the main character is deeply social and attest to the high standards set by Soviet viewers. The audience's aesthetic demands and interests correspond to the inner world of man in socialist society.

Of course, the above analysis only provides a few touches to the 'social portrait' of Soviet audiences, a demanding audience which expects cinema to be more than a cheap entertainment, to present a thoughtful approach to life with all its complexities and conflicts, not a retreat from the world into groundless illusions and social dreams, but a decisive penetration into life, a struggle for high ideals and deep human feelings.

# SOVIET FILMS ON FOREIGN SCREENS

The Soviet cinema is an integral part of world cinema. It is developing in creative contacts with international cinematographic organisations. The Soviet Union maintains cultural ties in the field of cinema with more than 100 countries across the world. As F. Ermash, Chairman of the State Cinema Committee under the Soviet Council of Ministers, said in an interview, the forms that such creative contacts take are varied: exchange of films, participation in film festivals, months, weeks, and premieres of films, joint production of films, assistance rendered to developing countries in training personnel for their own national cinemas, etc.

In the interests of truth, we must point out that the Soviet Union's attempts to expand contacts in the field of cinema have encountered resistance partly at the official level, partly at the unofficial level from corresponding organisations in the capitalist countries. There are many examples of this: Soviet films which are bought or received on a non-commercial basis are either not shown at all or are shown on a very limited basis on the screens of the United States, France, and other countries.

The major Western distributors try not to accept Soviet films for broad release, and films that are bought are often screened in a very limited number of theatres over a very short period of time. The problem is not that they are not 'box-office films' and cannot attract audiences. One proof of the success enjoyed by Soviet films are various film festivals, at which it is fairly difficult to even obtain a ticket for a Soviet film. A Week of Soviet Films enjoyed colossal success in a number of major cities across the United States in 1973, but films like *The Dawns Are Quiet Here* and *One Hundred Days After Childhood*, which received an Oscar and Silver Bear, were not released into the

big theatres. The reviewer for the *San Francisco Examiner* gave high praise to *One Hundred Days After Childhood* which give the relief from violence flooding the American screen. The American premiere of this film was some time ago, but it has never been widely distributed.

In France many Soviet films are released in theatres that are just cinema houses with a small number of seats located far from the centre of town. That is what happened during a Soviet Film Week at which *A Lovers' Romance*, *The Red Snow-Ball Tree*, *Mothers and Daughters*, and *Eccentrics* were shown. The films were screened in a small cinema theatre with only four hundred seats. They were also neither advertised nor mentioned in the press.

Western distributors claim that their policies are dictated by economic considerations alone. They also refer, along with this, to articles in the Western press. The Italian weekly *Il Tempo* tried to show, for instance, that Soviet films are not suitable for Western audiences because they are supposedly economically unprofitable. *Il Tempo* pointed out their lack of 'eroticism' as their major defect.

Yet letters received by many Western newspapers and magazines say just the opposite and film critics throughout the world give high praise to most Soviet films.

After a festival in the French town of Avignon in 1975, the newspaper *l'Humanite* observed: 'The Soviet Film Week presented at the Avignon Festival which included films from 1926 till 1974 was an act of genuine cultural significance, i.e. an act of political importance. This was a revelation for all, beginning with Communists, and not only an ethical revelation.' But perhaps objections will be raised that the French Communist newspaper was simply displaying international solidarity in its support of a Soviet film festival?

The French newspaper, *Le Monde*, which can hardly be suspected of socialist sympathies, wrote on this same subject: 'During this week of films in Avignon we discovered 15 films

from the 1950s and 1970s representing a national cinema and culture with which we cannot compete, given the condition of the French cinema.'

There is an enormous interest on the part of those concerned with cinema throughout the world and cinema-lovers as a whole in Soviet cinema.

The consistently favourable attitude towards Soviet cinema on the part of foreign audiences is not due, of course, to any 'subconscious promptings', but to an entirely conscious attitude towards cinema, which brings to audiences throughout the world lofty ideas and ideals summoning men to justice, creative construction, individual freedom, and humanity for the good of man. Audiences, foreign social and political figures, film historians and critics have spoken about this and continue to do so.

The newspaper *Expresso* (Lima) has written that Soviet cinema enables audiences to better understand that the greatest barrier dividing people is lack of sincerity and trustfulness. In the opinion of T. Sato (Eiga No Tomo) Soviet films are filled with nobility and warm observations about man.

Many prominent governmental and social figures and creative figures in the Indian cinema attended one of the Soviet film festivals in India, and among them was Archbishop A.J. Williams of the National Christian Council of India.

While still under the impression of the films shown, the Archbishop wrote a letter to the Soviet Consul in Bombay appraising Soviet films and their significance.

The letter read, that Soviet films are filled with the spirit of responsibility towards the society of man. Seeing them gives rise to a passionate striving in the viewer for the attainment of equality, justice and goodwill for all mankind.

International Film Weeks were held in Spain in 1975 in which films by Friedrich Ermler, Aleksandr Dovzhenko, Mikhail Romm, V. Petrov and other noted Soviet directors were presented. The Spanish press unanimously praised these films, which were 'a sensational example of genuinely political cin-

ema', films that were 'fresh, searching, and unusually inspired', and 'human in the best sense.'

These permanent qualities of the Soviet cinema were noted by foreign critics and audiences, both film connoisseurs and 'the men in the street', when they appraised individual Soviet films that had reached the screens of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

The screening of *A Soldier's Father* was termed 'The triumph of a humanist film' by the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahbar* (April 20, 1966).

The Danish newspaper *Aktuelt* called this same film 'a hymn to human love for one's neighbour during war and destruction'.

'At first glance', the *Aktuelt* critic wrote, 'it would seem that this is an extremely heroic war film praising Soviet feats and discrediting the enemy. But in reality this film is a talented hymn to man as a civilian, to human love for one's neighbour at a time when power was in the hands of murderers and savages. The entire film hangs on whether we believe this elderly grape-grower or only accept him as a pathetic, improbable symbol of civilian life.

'I have no doubts on this point. Sergo Zakariadze performs in the role of the old father so powerfully, authoritatively, emotionally, yet so accurately and with such truthful simplicity that he makes Makharashvili an amazingly alive, growing figure. When he jokes with his soldier comrades and reproaches them for not understanding life or not respecting life's value, Zakariadze always hits the mark. He never exaggerates or uses superfluous gestures or movements. His personality illuminates everything with a touching power and originality of conception.

'It is only natural that Zakariadze is a much-loved actor in his own country. In Denmark we are seeing him for the first time. He could be an ideal King Lear or Oedipus, and he would be a splendid interpreter of Galileo in Brecht's play. He has everything it takes and he can show everything. How casually, yet how deeply he takes us into his character's psychology.

You never get tired of studying the old peasant. His broad, craggy, bearded face with eyes full of pain and grief, with overhanging eyebrows, make it possible to read everything going on in his heart...'

*Al-Ahbar* stresses the enormous effect produced by this film on the audience thanks to the lofty humanism of its content and brought home to the audience's hearts and minds by Zakariadze.

'Love of man and a protest against war,' observed the film critic, 'which tears a labourer away from the earth and his peaceful work, which brings people good, is the basic theme in *A Soldier's Father* by Soviet director Rezo Chkheidze, a theme that rings out terrifyingly, passionately. The elderly Georgian peasant played by Sergo Zakariadze cannot reconcile himself with the fact that tanks have crushed the grape vines, and that the earth has been torn asunder by bombs, not by the plow. The old man takes up weapons to wipe out fascism, and to save the world and mankind's happiness. His nobility elevates the soul...'

The Norwegian newspaper *Verdens Gang* gave high praise to the film's director and leading actor, and discussed the ideas underlying the film. The newspaper wrote that the main character, an elderly Georgian, goes to war not from hatred for the enemy, but from love for the world, not because he takes pleasure in destruction, but because he wants to put an end to destruction. The *Dagbladet* joined in this analysis. The film's reviewer felt that the Russians had shown 'the monstrous inanity of war... The elderly Makharashvili is the very embodiment of humanity and kindness, a symbol of noble simplicity.'

We would like to say a few more words about another film on the war, *The Great Patriotic War*, which was not widely distributed abroad.

The political observer of the newspaper, *Nea*, wrote after a screening of the film for Greek and foreign journalists in the Soviet Embassy:

'The Soviet film we saw in the Embassy was a genuine mas-

terpiece of its type, and only very blinkered people could see it and criticise it from the point of view that the censorship commission adopted. This film is so humane and truthful that at moments one wants to weep. A work of this type elevates cinema to a creative height at which it can justifiably compete for primacy among the other arts.

‘It makes no difference that this is a work by Soviet filmmakers and that it praises the heroism of the Soviet people. This is a question that will only concern narrow-minded people. Others will rejoice that this is a work by man, for it advocates resistance to violence and animal savagery.’

Can it be that Soviet cinema is able to reveal war as a social phenomenon for what it is and praise humaneness instead of annihilation and sadism because the Soviet people know the grief war brings to fathers and mothers? Can it be that humanist themes in Soviet cinema begin and end with films on subjects of this type?

Yet European audiences warmly welcomed other Soviet films in their time: *Our Home*, *Once Upon a Time There Lived an Old Man and Old Woman*—ordinary films that were far from being massive films like *War and Peace* and *Liberation*.

The newspaper *Aktuel't* (December 8, 1965) published a lengthy article on the programme offered in the Soviet Film Week. The reviewer wrote:

‘The film *Our Home* has no unusual events, yet as we watch the film we are deeply touched, for this is all so truthful, it all affects us, it is all so filled with life and truth, and because it is infused with a sincere, heartfelt feeling. There is no sugary sentimentality, it is simply a film about good people who love each other in a simple, natural fashion, and who need each other.

‘What a contrast to the aggressive, elegant modernism typical of so many Western films. ...As I watched this film, I felt that I had known all these people for a long time and knew them very well. This is a film about our generation, not about the “degeneration” that often forms the subject of Western films.’

The *Kristeligt Dagblad* (December 14, 1965) published an article by film critic I. Tulstrup about the Soviet film week in which the critic went beyond the framework of film criticism to discuss social problems—or more correctly, social illnesses—of Western cinema.

‘The general impression made by this productive week of Soviet films is that an artistic and human challenge has been thrown out on the highest ethical level to Western film audiences, which at present are becoming quickly accustomed to seeing only sex, neurosis, and perversion on the screen.

‘Through these four refined films, the Russians have given us a description of people worthy of deep respect, all the more so that all these films furnish clear proof that this can be done without excessive sentimentality, with sincerity and truthfulness. After all, kindness and lack of affectation are two realities that should be documented, as the young Soviet directors of these films have done.

‘Moreover, this film week made a strong impression on us because it showed us the sincere warmth of Russians, which we should know and understand in order to “feel” these films.

‘Soviet films now display a welcome development away from cheerless dogmatism through “self-irony” towards inner freedom and independence.’

Readers may doubt whether we are not exaggerating the success of Soviet films abroad. After all, there are also unfavourable reviews and various critical approaches towards one and the same Soviet film. But the most important thing for us is the social appraisal given by cinema critics in, for instance, Scandinavia, the United States, Latin America, or Africa. We are deliberately not quoting from tendentious and negative reviews of films that were universally acclaimed by audiences and critics across the world. As for various approaches by individual film critics, they cannot disrupt the general picture of the acclaim that surrounds Soviet films on the whole.

It may be that someone does not like Smoktunovsky’s interpretation of Hamlet, or that the style of *A Lovers’ Romance*



is regarded as complex, or 'lyrically overburdened', as *Notre Temps* wrote (February 27, 1975). The plot development, the general conception, the stylistic features of a given film are deeply individual, and when appraising any work we should take into consideration the 'resultant force' of a work's objective significance and critics' subjective appraisals.

To take a complex film like *A Lovers' Romance*, for instance — the reader knows that it is a complex work from the sociological analysis of the film's reception by Soviet audiences. How was the film received by Western audiences?

It is usually said that Scandinavians are rational, unhurried, and calm. Whether this is true or not is for them to decide, but this film was received with great emotion by the calm Scandinavians.

The Finnish *Huhvudstadsbladet* (April 6, 1975) wrote: 'Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky's intelligent film is filled to over-flowing with heady happiness and crushing grief, and totally captivates the audience... From the very opening, the film is a hymn to love, the joyful, tender love that we feel when we are young.'

'Konchalovsky has made a rhythmic, breathless poem about love', observed the *Uusi Suomi* (April 6, 1975). 'This film liberates our feelings and brings kindness into the cruel modern world of films (i.e. Western films — *Ed.*)', wrote the *Suomenmaa* (April 9, 1975).

Some reviewers observed that Konchalovsky's film was filled with 'genuinely Slavic feeling', was 'overflowing with romantic feeling', and that Konchalovsky in his film 'speaks, sings, and even shouts about love', 'love with a capital L', as the film critic of the *Kansan Uutiset* (April 8, 1975) expressed it, a feeling which in the West 'at present people are ashamed to speak of even in a whisper'.

Now let us look at reactions to this film by German and Czech film critics.

M. Haedler from *Der Morgen* (June 11, 1976) also called Konchalovsky's film 'a hymn to love'. The same critic continu-

ed, 'At first glance, the story seems banal, borrowed from a cheap novel, but when you examine it more attentively you sense the grandeur of the human soul and a real philosophical depth.

'In making a very subjective film, the Soviet director arrived at philosophical statements and awakened strong feelings in the viewer, thus bringing home the film's main idea to him.

'The director consciously introduced foreign elements to offset the subjective language of the visual means, showing spotlights and the film crew on screen. In this way he cools down the audience's feelings, pointing out the story's fictional nature and stressing that it is an invention, thus making this individual story an event of universal significance.'

Film critics pointed out the film's contemporary flavour, the stylistic texture of the narrative. The Czechoslovak newspaper *Nové slovo* wrote:

'This *Romance* by a Soviet director, is very much of our times, a film for today, but it cannot be understood by everyone. Czech audiences will not be able to respond immediately to traditional theatrical, musical-dramatic forms, whether opera or ballet, or a Brechtian play—in short, anything expressed in a stylised manner. However, this film cannot fail to move its audiences.

'*A Lovers' Romance* is a highly interesting and valuable experiment. Moreover, its dramatic conflicts arise from the idea that the life of a free man in socialist society can be and will be lofty, poetic, and creative. The film's director has made an enormous contribution to cinema, although this effort has not been completed in many respects.

'This film is full of searchings and has made the attempt to be a major effort, rather than just a repeat of literary or television efforts. It makes us reflect on the problems it raises.'

But perhaps there are Soviet films which do not awaken any response in foreign audiences because of their specifically Soviet subject matter, the complexity of their themes which deal with, for instance, production problems and other 'local'

problems which might, at first glance, seem of little interest to them. Perhaps films about 'production themes', which are appropriate to Soviet cinema, are not able to touch the hearts and minds of audiences in Italy or France.

Let foreign audiences judge for themselves, those same audiences whose opinions are expressed by numerous newspapers and magazines.

One such film on a 'production theme' is *The Bonus*, stylistically complex, as is the basic conception underlying it.

The French newspaper *l'Humanité* wrote that '*The Bonus* is a big bonus to Soviet cinema in 1974, a marvelous work... Finally a film has achieved commercial distribution in France showing a Party committee meeting on a large construction site...' The newspaper *Rouge* developed this idea further, saying that 'From the very beginning the film makes one think ... the most important thing in the film is its basic idea and documental quality.' Its main idea in the opinion of many film critics was to show the new man in a situation filled with dramatic conflicts.

The press organ of the Italian Communist Party, *Unità* called *The Bonus* 'outstanding', 'passionate', and 'complex', a film 'dedicated to the fate of a whole group of people united into one whole, a film capable of stirring up discussion on more than aesthetic aspects'.

And the film did stir up discussion. One French magazine observed, in writing about the film's screening: '...we feel as if we know these people closely. They really do exist, they are needed. Try to find something similar in French political cinema—you won't be able to.'

And on our own part, we should add—not only in French cinema. That is why the thinking film critic and viewer felt the director to be frank in the themes he presented, to have rejected clichés, and to have successfully shown the complexity of the film's main characters. The French *Liberation* noted: 'This film is deeply attractive and warm, made with a sense of the time... *The Bonus* is a fascinating spectacle

for us, especially at a time when Leonid Brezhnev is speaking about the Soviet economy from the rostrum of the Twenty-Fifth Congress...'

Soviet cinema has made many screen adaptations of the best world classics: Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Pushkin's *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Tolstoy's *War and Peace* found a new life on the screen.

Screen adaptations of literary works are one of the basic categories within Soviet cinema. To bring the broad masses a screen interpretation of the best works by Soviet, Russian, and foreign authors is not an easy task, but it is very necessary and important.

Both audiences and critics in many countries have unanimously pointed out the cultural and social significance of Soviet screen adaptations which have fully and lovingly brought to people of different ages and educational backgrounds not only the content of works, but have also been faithful to the author's artistic conception, to the work's ideas and spirit. Critics have termed this a result of the skill of Soviet filmmakers, their exhaustive knowledge and understanding of works, their respect for the author and the people who gave the world this talented writer.

An Italian critic writing in the *Paese Sera* (December 23, 1967) observed that 'Soviet cinema takes a more respectful approach towards writers who inspire them than does Hollywood. Soviet cinema is faithful to the letter and the spirit of the work.' This is true. Therefore it can be no surprise that film adaptations of world classics showed these traits, which are an integral part of the phenomenon of the Soviet cinema.

The Danish *Land og folk* (November 3, 1967) headed its review of Bondarchuk's *War and Peace*: 'A stunning, splendid screen adaptation of *War and Peace*. Genuine Tolstoy.' *Politiken* (November 3, 1967) wrote of the same film: 'A staggering work, true to the writer's spirit.' The Belgian *Pan* (March 8, 1967) wrote: "A monument to cinematic fidelity,

without equal in its genre.' The Argentinian *Propósitos* (May 2, 1974) wrote of L. Kulidzhanov's *Crime and Punishment*: 'a faithful recreation of the era' and 'a work worthy of Dostoevsky'.

In order to more fully understand this feature of the Soviet cinema, let us see what newspapers of various slants in those countries where Soviet screen adaptations have been shown have to say. We shall limit ourselves to only a few excerpts which, it seems to us, present a mixture of public opinion on the most important works.

For many decades Tolstoy's *War and Peace* attracted the attention of film-makers throughout the world. Prominent film-makers of many countries brought its characters and events to the screen with varying degree of success. Some of these adaptations were very unsuccessful and attracted no critical notice, while others were reviewed and rated according to their merits. The Russian pre-revolutionary cinema had also brought Tolstoy's novel to the screen.

However, it will be no exaggeration to say that *War and Peace* was truly reborn in Sergei Bondarchuk's film. The world press unanimously acclaimed this adaptation as worthy of Tolstoy's genius.

It would be hard to name a country that did not give a rapturous reception to one of the best Soviet films of the 1960s, Sergei Bondarchuk's *War and Peace*.

Long before the film was distributed in the United States, the magazine *Greater Amusements* carried the following description of it:

'One of the great motion picture events of 1968 will take place in early spring, when the Walter Read Organization will release the majestic Russian film *War and Peace* as a road-show...' This Tolstoy epic which was written in seven years, was five years in the making, and takes eight hours to show, but divided into two parts. So far 98,000,000 people have seen this outstanding epic. Some of the rave quotes heard from around the world—"Many years of work have gone into

each sequence of the film and the result is a highly artistic work of art, which has no difficulty in captivating cinema-goers." Another comment, "This epic film is close to the literary original. It has been playing to smashing success in Tokyo, Berlin and Paris. Sergei Bondarchuk, the director, also wrote the screenplay. *Greater Amusements* is applauding the Read Organization for one of the greatest efforts of an independent film company, for bringing the towering *War and Peace* to the United States and a better understanding of Russian culture."

*The New York Post* supported this appraisal of the Soviet film and described the six-and-a-half hour charity premiere of *War and Peace* in the De Mille Theatre, for which tickets had been sold at 125 dollars a head. 'At the end they remained in their seats to applaud a long list of film credits, an unusual tribute to foreign moviemakers.' Among the film's virtues the reviewer pointed out its deeply realistic spirit, its truthfulness: 'This film has the ring of truth, of sweat, of grandiose patriotic effort that climaxes Russia's genius for film-making dating back to the now-classic *Ivan the Terrible*, of the 1930s. It is destined to be the movie picture of the year.'

*War and Peace* was a triumph not only in the United States, France, Sweden, and England. Audiences applauded the film with the same enthusiasm in Japan, Argentina, Chili, and Mexico. The newspaper *Cine mundial* (December 3, 1965) wrote: 'Any adjective seems inadequate to describe the grandeur of the Soviet *War and Peace*... Tolstoy's masterpiece has been brought to the screen lovingly and respectfully, for we are used to seeing how even the greatest writers are betrayed when their works are adapted for the screen. Tolstoy's spirit has remained untampered with. His noble attitudes on life and people are faithfully reflected throughout the entire film.'

The overwhelming majority of film reviewers and observers felt that 'the film was a speech for the prosecution against the inhumanity of war', that it attracted 'attention by the uniqueness of its goal', and stunned audiences 'with its magni-

ficent beauty and its perfect reconstruction of the era.'

The film's effect on audiences in many countries was so remarkable that it was suggested that 'Book stores and department stores can also be prevailed upon to feature window displays of the hardcover and paperback editions, together with stills and blowups from the film... Enlist high schools and colleges to make it required reading, followed by discussions about the book from a sociological, historical and political point of view. Arrange for radio and TV cross-conversations between professors of history and literature and theologians concerning the characters and incidents in the book which have been faithfully transferred to the screen. Contact local art galleries and museums about setting up displays of costumes, uniforms, paintings, sculptures, books, icons, arms, furniture and other artifacts of Russia of the Tsars, particularly Alexander I.'

No other film had ever received such unqualified acclaim!

Newspapers also published the opinions of ordinary film-goers. One such viewer was Dr. Jan Larson, whose letter was published in a Stockholm newspaper (April 11, 1968):

'I was fortunate enough to see both parts of Sergei Bondarchuk's marvelous *War and Peace*, and my enthusiasm would be difficult to describe. In order to see this film I travelled twice to Stockholm and once to Goteborg. This magnificent, powerful work is the high point of Soviet culture. Like many film-lovers throughout the world, I personally experienced a great sense of joy and gratitude for this deeply gripping and enriching film'.

The Swiss newspaper *Echo* (September 24, 1967) reviewed *War and Peace* and expressed public opinion in many countries: '*War and Peace* is a beautiful, moving, life-affirming fresco, a spectacle which enriches and convinces.'

The screening of *War and Peace* in many countries went far beyond being a 'spectacle'. It served to acquaint the foreign audience with Russian culture, art, and history. In Belgium, for instance, before and after the film's screening there were

television and radio programmes every half hour devoted to Tolstoy's work, and there was a television competition structured around knowledge of the novel. The winner received a free trip to the Soviet Union from the distributors handling release of *War and Peace*.

The film's screening in a number of countries was accompanied by special types of advertising. In some West German theatres viewers were met by German students dressed in the uniforms of Russian soldiers and officers, and one theatre owner, as the press reported it, placed a cannon from Napoleonic times at the theatre entrance with a model costumed as a grenadier guard.

Advertising is advertising, but of course, it did not determine the fantastic success scored by *War and Peace*.

But perhaps readers will ask if the successful adaptation of Tolstoy's novel for the screen can not be explained more simply: by the fact that it was made in the writer's native country. Who, if not the Russians, could understand this work so perfectly?

It is not so simple, however. Firstly, because the history of our cinema has already included unsuccessful adaptations of the novel, which were mentioned at the beginning of this book. Secondly, Soviet cinema is also well known for its brilliant adaptations of foreign classics.

One example of this is *Don Quixote*, directed by Grigori Kozintsev from Cervantes' novel.

Foreign theatrical and film critics observed that the number of theatrical works inspired by Cervantes' novel has already topped one hundred.

One of the most original, though also controversial—in the opinion of the Spanish newspaper *Arriba* (June 3, 1966)—was the play entitled *Liberated Don Quixote* by Anatoly Lunacharsky, the first Soviet ambassador to Spain.

There have not been a great many movies made about Don Quixote. There are fewer than twenty such films. French, German, Italian, and American productions have been made



about the famous *hidalgo*, drawing on various individual scenes from the novel, with varying degrees of success. Film critics praised the best adaptations and tore the weaker ones to shreds. But one way or another audiences in many countries were well acquainted with screen adaptations of Cervantes' novel. What could a new Soviet version offer to this famous work?

The newspaper *Madrid* (June 3, 1966) published a long review of the film which not only praised the adaptation, but also compared Kozintsev's film with a number of other variants and showed the reason for the triumph of the Soviet version.

'If *Don Quixote* is one of the five or six greatest works created by man's genius, how can foreign film-makers bring it to the screen?' Thus the reviewer framed the question of how Cervantes' work could be filmed outside of Spain.

Critics in various countries observed that Russian cinema had created a magnificent film with deep respect for this world-famous novel, one which stirred up great curiosity and produced a stirring impression.

What, then, was the cause of the success enjoyed by Kozintsev's *Don Quixote* everywhere in the world where it was shown, whether in Scandinavia, Italy, the United States, or Spain?

'Now we have a Russian screen adaptation. The very best. Magnificent,' wrote *Madrid*.

'The Russians have understood Cervantes' masterpiece better than anyone else. Gogol, Dostoevsky, and especially Turgenev, more than any other foreign writers, were suffused with the spirit of *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. And this can be said not only of cultural figures, but of the Russian people in general: five million copies of Cervantes' great work has been sold out in the Soviet Union. It was therefore entirely natural that the Russians would try to bring it to the screen, for they have outstandingly talented directors. And so we now see *Don Quixote*, a masterly work, an artistic masterpiece.

'Kozintsev allowed himself a certain transposition of events

in the story about Don Quixote's adventures. However, having chosen the most important ones, he was able to make a difficult, yet successful synthesis of the novel's basic features. He was especially successful in embodying the main idea underlying Cervantes' novel in the film, not only in the figure of the central character, but in his faithful dogbody. Kozintsev created a very moving work, and one that is aesthetically pleasing.'

'We should point out, first of all,' stressed the Spanish critics, 'that the Russian version is worthy of great respect and shows the great efforts made by the director and actors, who demonstrated their excellent knowledge of Cervantes' novel, and treated it with due respect.'

'It is only natural that this synthesis is very complex, but good watching, if one interprets correctly the most fundamental features of Cervantes' work: the Quixotic spirit, humanity, and irony.'

'Grigori Kozintsev's work was very important, and not only because he approached this theme with evident respect, but also because of certain purely cinematic factors: his skilful recreation of the atmosphere.'

Cervantes' satire attained a 'burning reality' in Kozintsev's screen version. The film's direction was classical in style, developed with an accuracy and precision that, in the words of *Les Lettres Françaises* (January 5, 1966), always calls forth admiration.

'Kozintsev conveyed Cervantes' novel in splendidly brilliant images. He has found the exact equivalent of Castile in the Crimea—the sun-scorched plateaux, the tempered sky. The adventures of the famous knight, played with somewhat haughty nobility by Cherkasov, come alive in natural settings, which allow Kozintsev and his cameraman, Moskvina, to create plastic compositions reminiscent of Velasquez and Goya in their dramatic intensity and soft limpidity. Don Quixote's mad pursuit of fantasy is shown with the authenticity that the Spanish so greatly admire—the Spanish, who are so demanding of everything concerning their national

heroes. True, this illustration is slightly academic. But, if the novel's richness and complexity cannot always be observed, Cervantes' profound meaning and his sweeping range has been preserved. That is why among all the cinematic versions of *Don Quixote*, Kozintsev's film is undoubtedly the most worthy of and closest to the original.'

One newspaper focused attention on this side of events: 'For thirty long years Franco's supporters have prevented the showing of Soviet films in Spain. And now, after such a long break, on March 7 this year the grand opening of the Soviet *Don Quixote* directed by Grigori Kozintsev took place in Madrid.'

A film critic who wished to remain anonymous, signing his review of *Don Quixote* by the initials K.B. in a Valencia newspaper described his impression of the Soviet film:

'Yesterday we attended the premiere of this film, filled with curiosity. The famous Spanish *hidalgo* transferred to the screen by a Russian director and actors — this is very unusual. We must give them their due, however, for we were very satisfied that we had attended this cinematic event. To see with our own eyes how Russian technicians and actors recreated the figure of the famous Spanish hero, how they understood the work and, above all, the Knight of the Mournful Countenance, given their different cast of mind and way of thinking — this was extraordinarily interesting.'

The anonymous K.B. was not alone in his enraptured response to Kozintsev's film, which stressed the enormous cultural and social significance of the screening of this Soviet film.

A film critic from another newspaper expressed his solidarity with his colleague in his appraisal of *Don Quixote*: the authenticity of the adaptation, which demonstrates that the authors not only understood the content of Cervantes' novel, the era in which it took place, the social implications of its ideas, but also respected the spirit of the work:

'Finally the figure of Cervantes' immortal hero, Don Quixote

te, has appeared on our screens in a brilliant Russian cinematic version, a dynamic spectacle with magnificent technical and acting accomplishments, distinguished by its fidelity to the literary source and showing the wanderings of our great Castilian *hidalgo* on the wide screen, in colour, recreating the appearance of La Mancha. We wish to stress the accuracy with which they have recreated the atmosphere of the time, as well as the work of the director in general and in detail, in the costuming and set design, in the depiction of Spanish life and customs—everything that gives beauty to these picturesque episodes chosen from the novel.

‘The director, along with script-writer E. Shvarts, has understood Cervantes’ great, all-encompassing work and offered us a magnificent, worthy story about the cares and sorrows of our last wandering knight.’

*Don Quixote* is not just a lucky, but accidental exception among Soviet films adapted from world classics.

If you look through newspapers and magazines from Italy, West Germany, Argentina, India, Mexico, and New Zealand which publish film reviews, you will be quickly convinced that there has been almost no Soviet film adapted from a well-known literary work which has not been ecstatically received by audiences and film critics.

‘The main virtue of *King Lear*,’ one Italian newspaper wrote, ‘is that it is absolutely faithful to the Shakespearian text.’ The *Mattino* took up this line and wrote: ‘the Soviet *King Lear* did not disappoint us, but fully affirmed the exceptional ability and subtlety with which Soviet cinema treats the great classics of world literature.’

We could go on quoting from reviews in the world press universally acclaiming Soviet screen versions of literary classics *ad infinitum*.

In 1965 Grigori Kozintsev’s screen version of *Hamlet* was released in a number of countries in Latin America. Although there were no doubts as to the director’s talent expressed in Mexico, Chili, Columbia, and Argentina, there were sceptics

who asked: 'Is it possible to add anything new after the Olivier version?'

The universal response of the great majority of film critics was that it was worth while making yet another version. The Chilean magazine *Screen* carried a lengthy review of the Soviet film analysing the director's work, acting, and music, which it regarded as 'functional' in the film, and came to the conclusion that Kozintsev's *Hamlet* is a 'fundamentally new *Hamlet*... The Soviet *Hamlet* is a man, not an abstraction... The Soviet *Hamlet* is a modern hero seething with inner passion, yet ready to struggle against his fate. The director's epic vision finds its exact expression in a cinematic work of unexcelled splendour.'

One Bolivian newspaper observed that 'the Russian *Hamlet* is a truly Shakespearean *Hamlet* interpreted in a modern light, deeply felt, and endowed with immortal human qualities... The Russian *Hamlet* is a triumph of Russian cinema.' Reviewers unanimously pointed out Kozintsev's erudition and talent, which were capable of transporting the viewer into 'the world of the seventh art', and the humanism of the director 'who had a splendid knowledge of European culture'.

A year later Kozintsev's *Hamlet* received major attention from the press in America and in several European countries. The American *Morning News* wrote about 'the stunning success of the Russian film' on American screens and pin-pointed the reason for the film's success with American audiences: 'What director Grigori Kozintsev (he also wrote the screenplay, based on a Boris Pasternak translation) has done is open the play up—depicting that which is only implied in the stage version. The result is a picture filled with action, marvellous outdoor scenes, spectacle and vitality.' Reviewers noted the new, genuinely Shakespearean interpretation of *Hamlet*, *Ophelia*, and other characters in the play and film. In Kozintsev's interpretation, *Hamlet* is a 'prince filled with moral indignation, suspicion, cynicism—a man of action, outrage and intensity... *Ophelia*, the sadly tragic heroine, is a very real and

a very lovely girl — her mad scene is one of the most impressive portrayals we have seen.'

One can, of course, agree or not agree with reviewers' individual opinions on one or another aspect of the director's interpretation of Hamlet or Ophelia, but a Chilean critic was undoubtedly right when he wrote: 'This version of Shakespeare's play in a Slavic and materialist interpretation is effected by using all the best possibilities of film as an art-form and thanks to a subtle perception on the part of Russian directors... The director's conception and talent is on a grand scale... The Soviet film *Hamlet* is far removed from the traditional Hamlet and possesses all the qualities of an outstanding cinematic event...'

## INSTEAD OF AN AFTERWORD

And so the last page of our story, the story of the formation, development and current state of the Soviet cinema, has been written.

The authors make no claims that their book should be regarded by the reader as an encyclopedia of sorts encompassing the history of the Soviet cinema. The task we set ourselves was much more modest: to show the foreign reader who is interested in cinema what exactly the phenomenon of the Soviet cinema is, what tasks it faced at various stages of its history, and how it cut new paths in its creative searchings.

The authors wanted to paint a vivid panorama of these searchings and bold decisions, the history of the making of individual films which have become world-renown classics, to discuss frankly those complex problems in Soviet cinema which were resolved in the interests of art and the audience. We strove to paint a sociological portrait of Soviet audiences — literate, well-wishing, and exigent towards their most beloved and most mass-oriented of all the arts.

Was such a broad-scale sociological and critical analysis of the Soviet cinema needed? Yes, because this approach to cinema today makes it possible for the reader and film-goer to creatively, avoiding all clichés, evaluate given films, especially those made in the past and shown today on screens across the world.

Our task was to help the viewer respond to films, their content, and stylistics not only on an emotional basis, but also by a rational approach towards the film's plot, the characters' psychological nuances, and actions.

We tried to create the context necessary for the reader and viewer to understand what goes on behind the scenes in making a film and which must be taken into consideration in understanding the artist's conception.

2

In order to understand correctly the idea underlying a film, you must know the film's 'biography', the historical conditions in which it was made. This is true not only of screen adaptations of literary classics, films that recount our country's distant past, but also of films dealing with present-day problems.

This book cannot claim to have contributed the final word on Soviet film. For cinema reflects the richness of contemporary life in all its complexity and variety and develops together with society and life itself. The best works in Soviet cinema tell of the deeds, thoughts, and hopes of those people for whom they are made, and the development of Soviet cinema is a many-faceted, dialectical process, regardless of the subjects individual film-makers may deal with: our country's heroic past, screen adaptations of the classics, problems in international affairs, the education of young people, the daily labour of the Soviet people.

The path lying before Soviet cinema is the same one lying before the whole of Soviet society: the path of labour, struggle for its ideals, and accomplishments for the good of the people.



# FILMOGRAPHY

## A

*Academician Ivan Pavlov* (Lenfilm), 1949

*Script:* M. Papava; *Dir:* G. Roshal; *Phot:* V. Gardanov, M. Magid, L. Sokolsky, E. Kirpichev; *Des:* E. Eney, A. Vexler; *Music:* D. Kabalevsky; *Sound:* A. Shargorodsky.

*Cast:* A. Borisov, N. Alisova, V. Chestnokov, F. Nikitin, V. Balashov, V. Safonov, N. Plotnikov, M. Safonova, K. Dmitriev, G. Shpigel, G. Belnikevich, N. Cherkasov.

*Admiral Nakhimov* (Mosfilm), 1946

*Script:* I. Lukovsky; *Dir:* V. Pudovkin; *Phot:* A. Golovnya, T. Lobova; *Des:* V. Egorov, A. Weisfeld, M. Yuferov; *Music:* N. Kryukov; *Sound:* V. Zorin, M. Shmelev.

*Cast:* A. Diky, E. Samoilov, V. Vladimirsky, V. Pudovkin, N. Chaplygin, V. Kovrigin, P. Sobolevsky, L. Knyazev, A. Khokhlov, R. Simonov, P. Gaideburov, B. Olenin, N. Brilling, G. Gumilevsky, N. Aparin, G. Rozhdestvensky, K. Starostin.

*Admiral Ushakov* (Mosfilm), 1953

*Script:* A. Shtein; *Dir:* M. Romm; *Phot:* A. Shelenkov, Chen Yulan; *Des:* A. Parkhomenko, L. Shengelaya, A. Weisfeld; *Music:* A. Khachaturyan; *Sound:* S. Minervin.

*Cast:* I. Pereverzev, B. Livanov, N. Svobodin, N. Chistyakov, G. Yudin, V. Druzhnikov, S. Bondarchuk, O. Zhizneva.

*Aelita* (Mezhrabpom-Rus), 1924

*Script:* F. Otsep, A. Tolstoy, A. Faiko (from a novel of the same name by A. Tolstoy); *Dir:* Ya. Protazanov; *Phot:* Yu. Zhelyabuzhsky, E. Shyuneman; *Des:* S. Kozlovsky, V. Simonov, I. Rabinovich.

*Cast:* I. Ilinsky, Yu. Solntseva, N. Tsereteli, N. Batalov, V. Orlova, V. Kuindzhi, P. Pol, N. Tretyakova, K. Eggert, Yu. Zavadsky, A. Peregonets, I. Tolchanov, S. Levitina, G. Volkonskaya, V. Massalitinova, G. Kravchenko, T. Adelgeim, M. Zharov, N. Rogozhin, N. Vishnyak.

*Aerograd* (Mosfilm and Ukrainfilm), 1935

*Script and Dir:* A. Dovzhenko; *Phot:* E. Tisse, M. Gindin, N. Smirnov; *Des:* A. Utkin, V. Panteleev; *Music:* D. Kabalevsky; *Sound:* N. Timartsev.

*Cast:* S. Shagaida, S. Stolyarov, E. Melnikova, S. Shkurat, G. Tsoi, N. Tabunasov, L. Kan, I. Kim, B. Dobronravov, V. Uralsky, V. Novikov, E. Maksimova.

*Afonya* (Mosfilm), 1975

*Script:* A. Borodyansky; *Dir:* G. Danelia; *Phot:* S. Vronsky; *Des:* B. Nemechek; *Music:* M. Weinberg.

*Cast:* L. Kuravlyov, E. Simonova, E. Leonov, B. Brondukov, V. Basso, N. Maslova.

*Aleksandr Nevsky* (Mosfilm), 1938

*Script:* P. Pavlenko, S. Eisenstein; *Phot:* E. Tisse; *Des:* I. Shpinel, N. Solovyov; *Music:* S. Prokofiev; *Sound:* V. Bogdankevich.

*Cast:* N. Cherkasov, N. Okhlopov, A. Abrikosov, D. Orlov, V. Novikov, N. Arsky, V. Massalitinova, V. Ivasheva, I. Danilova, V. Ershov, S. Blinnikov, I. Lagutin, N. Rogozhin.

*Alisher Navoi* (Tashkent Studios), 1947

*Script:* A. Speshnev, I. Sultanov, S. Uigun, V. Shklovsky; *Dir:* K. Yarmatov; *Phot:* M. Krasnensky; *Des:* V. Eremyan; *Music:* R. Glier, T. Sadykov; *Sound:* G. Senchilo.

*Cast:* R. Khamraev, A. Ismatov, A. Dzhalilov, T. Nazarova, S. Talipov, R. Pirmukhamedov, S. Yunusov, L. Nazrulaev, Sh. Azimov, K. Khodzhaev, A. Tashbaev.

*Alone* (Soyuzkino, Leningrad), 1931

*Script and Dir:* G. Kozintsev, L. Trauberg; *Sound Dir:* L. Arnsh-tam; *Phot:* A. Moskvina; *Des:* E. Enei; *Music:* D. Shostakovich; *Sound:* I. Volk.

*Cast:* E. Kuzmina, P. Sobolevsky, S. Gerasimov, M. Babanova, Van Lui-syan, Ya. Zheimo, B. Chirkov.

*And Quiet Flows the Don* (Parts I and II, 1957; Part III — 1958), (Gorky Studios)

*Script and Dir:* S. Gerasimov (from the novel by M. Sholokhov); *Phot:* V. Rapoport; *Des:* B. Dulenkov; *Music:* Yu. Levitin; *Sound:* D. Flyangolts.

*Cast:* I. Ilchenko, A. Filippova, P. Glebov, N. Smirnov, L. Khityaeva, E. Bystritskaya, N. Arkhangel'skaya, A. Blagovestov, Z. Kirienko.

*Andrei Rublyov* (Mosfilm), 1971

*Script:* A. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky, A. Tarkovsky; *Dir:* A. Tarkovsky; *Phot:* V. Yusov; *Des:* E. Chernyaev, I. Novoderezhkin, S. Voronkov; *Music:* V. Ovchinnikov; *Sound:* I. Zelentsova.

*Cast:* A. Solonitsyn, I. Lapikov, N. Grinko, N. Sergeev, Yu. Nazarov, N. Burlyaev, I. Tarkovskaya.

*And What If It's Love?* (Mosfilm), 1961

*Script:* I. Olshansky, N. Rudneva, Yu. Raizman; *Dir:* Yu. Raizman; *Phot:* A. Kharitonov; *Des:* M. Novoderezhkin, S. Voronkov; *Music:* R. Shchedrin; *Sound:* S. Minervin.

*Cast:* Zh. Prokhorenko, I. Pushkarev, N. Nazarova, N. Shorina, Yu. Tsoglin, N. Batyreva, A. Mironov, G. Yudenich, E. Zharikov, A. Golik, N. Fedosova, O. Shakhova, L. Shkalikova, A. Pavlova, V. Khokhryakov, M. Andrianova, M. Durasova, A. Georgievskaya, N. Beloborodova, E. Bykadorov.

*Anton Ivanovich Loses His Temper* (Lenfilm), 1941

*Script:* E. Petrov, G. Munblit; *Dir:* A. Ivanovsky; *Phot:* E. Shapiro; *Des:* O. Mandel, A. Vexler; *Music:* D. Kabalevsky; *Sound:* I. Dmitriev.

*Cast:* I. Konovalov, P. Kadochnikov, L. Tselikovskaya, T. Kondrakova, T. Glebova, V. Kilchevsky, A. Korolkevich, V. Gardin, S. Martinson.

*Arsenal* (VUFKU, Odessa), 1929

*Script and Dir:* A. Dovzhenko; *Phot:* D. Demutsky; *Des:* I. Shpindel, V. Muller; *Music:* I. Belza.

*Cast:* S. Svashenko, N. Kuchinsky, D. Erdman, S. Petrov, G. Kharikov, A. Buchma, K. Mikhailovsky, A. Evdakov, F. Merlatti, N. Nademsky, B. Zagorsky, T. Wagner.

*Arshin Mal Alan* (Baku Film Studios), 1945

*Script:* S. Rakhman (from a musical comedy of the same name by U. Gadzhibekov); *Dir:* R. Takhmasib, N. Leshchenko; *Phot:* A. Atakishiev, M. Dadashev; *Des:* Yu. Shvets; *Music:* U. Gadzhibekov; *Sound:* A. Kerimov.

*Cast:* R. Beibutov, L. Dzhevanshirova, A. Husein-zade, I. Efendiev, M. Kalantarly, L. Abdulaev, R. Mustafaeva, F. Mekhralieva, M. Aliev.

*Ballad of a Soldier* (Mosfilm), 1959

*Script:* V. Ezhov, G. Chukhrai; *Dir:* G. Chukhrai; *Phot:* V. Nikolaev, E. Savelyeva; *Des:* B. Nemechek; *Music:* M. Ziv; *Sound:* V. Kirshenbaum.

*Cast:* V. Ivashov, Zh. Prokhorenko, A. Maksimova, N. Kryuchkov, E. Urbansky.

*The Baltic Deputy* (Lenfilm), 1936

*Script:* D. Del, A. Zarkhi, I. Heifits, L. Rakhmanov; *Dir:* A. Zarkhi, I. Heifits; *Phot:* M. Kaplan; *Des:* N. Suvorov, V. Kalyagin; *Music:* N. Timofeev; *Sound:* A. Shargorodsky, E. Nesterov.

*Cast:* N. Cherkasov, M. Domasheva, B. Livanov, O. Zhakov, A. Melnikov, M. Dubrava, V. Kazarinov, Ya. Malyutin, A. Matov, F. Kurikhin, F. Fokin, F. Sladkopevtsev, N. Nademsky, A. Zarchitskaya.

*Battleship 'Potemkin'* (Goskino), 1925

*Script:* N. Agadzhanova; *Dir:* S. Eisenstein, G. Aleksandrov; *Phot:* E. Tisse; *Des:* V. Rakhals.

*Cast:* A. Antonov, V. Barsky, G. Aleksandrov, M. Gomorov, I. Bobrov, A. Levshin, A. Fait.

*The Beginning* (Lenfilm), 1970

*Script:* E. Gabilovich, G. Panfilov; *Dir:* G. Panfilov; *Phot:* D. Dolinin; *Des:* M. Gaukhman-Sverdlov; *Music:* V. Bibergin; *Sound:* G. Gavrilova.

*Cast:* I. Churikova, V. Telichkina, T. Stepanova, L. Kuravlyov, M. Kononov, N. Skomorokhina, T. Bedova, Yu. Klepikov, G. Beglov, Yu. Vizbor, V. Vassiliev, E. Lebedev, V. Sobolev.

*The Big Family* (Lenfilm), 1954

*Script:* V. Kochetov, S. Kara (from V. Kochetov's novel *The Zhurbins*); *Dir:* I. Heifits; *Phot:* S. Ivanov; *Des:* V. Volin, V. Savostin; *Music:* V. Pushkov; *Sound:* A. Shargorodsky.

*Cast:* S. Lukyanov, B. Andreev, V. Kuznetsova, A. Batalov, S. Kurilov, V. Medvedev, I. Bityukov, I. Arepina, K. Luchko, E. Savinova, N. Sergeev, E. Dobronravova, P. Kadochnikov, L. Kronberg, N. Gritsenko, B. Kokovkin, I. Nazarov, N. Emelyanov, V. Tatosov, B. Kudryashov, A. Khlopotov, N. Lobanov.

*The Blue Notebook* (Gorky Studios), 1963

*Script* and *Dir*: L. Kulidzhanov (from a story by E. Kazakevich);  
*Phot*: I. Shatrov; *Des*: B. Dulenkov; *Music*: M. Ziv; *Sound*: D. Belevich.

*Cast*: M. Kuznetsov, M. Nikelberg, N. Lebedev, A. Palees, E. Magalishvili, V. Livanov, N. Rabbe, L. Sokolova, I. Ozerov, Yu. Solovyov, V. Kurkin, B. Tokarev, A. Antosevich, V. Matveev, I. Ryzhov.

*Bogdan Khmel'nitsky* (Kiev Studios), 1941

*Script*: A. Korneichuk; *Dir*: I. Savchenko; *Phot*: Yu. Ekelchik;  
*Des*: Ya. Rivosh; *Music*: S. Pototsky; *Sound*: G. Grigoryev, R. Bisnovataya.

*Cast*: N. Mordvinov, G. Zhukovskaya, N. Ilchenko, B. Bezgin, A. Ivanchenko, V. Politseimako, M. Zharov, B. Andreev, E. Tsesarskaya.

*The Bold Seven* (Lenfilm), 1936

*Script*: Yu. German, S. Gerasimov; *Dir*: S. Gerasimov; *Phot*: E. Velichko; *Des*: V. Semyonov; *Music*: V. Pushkov; *Sound*: A. Sharгородsky, L. Shapiro.

*Cast*: N. Bogolyubov, T. Makarova, I. Novoseltsev, O. Zhakov, A. Absolon, I. Kuznetsov, P. Aleinikov.

*Byelorussian Station* (Mosfilm), 1970

*Script*: V. Trunin; *Dir*: A. Smirnov; *Phot*: P. Lebeshev; *Des*: V. Korovin; *Music*: B. Okudzhava; *Sound*: Ya. Pototsky.

*Cast*: A. Glazyrin, E. Leonov, A. Papanov, V. Safonov, N. Urgant, R. Kurkina, L. Sokolova, M. Terekhova, N. Kolofidin, N. Volkov, A. Yanvarev.

## C

*The Chairman* (Part I, *The Brothers*; Part II, *To Be a Man* — Mosfilm), 1964

*Script*: Yu. Nagibin; *Dir*: A. Saltykov; *Phot*: V. Nikolaev; *Des*: S. Ushakov; *Music*: A. Kholminov; *Sound*: N. Kropotov.

*Cast*: M. Ulyanov, I. Lapikov, N. Mordyukova, V. Nevinny, V. Vladimirova, K. Golovko, A. Trusov, V. Gulyaev, A. Bogdanova, A. Kashperov, A. Krychenkov, L. Blinova, N. Parfyonova, A. Galchenkov.

*Chapaev* (Lenfilm), 1934

*Script* and *Dir*: Vassilyev Brothers (from the novel of the same name by D. Furmanov); *Phot*: A. Sigaev, A. Ksenofontov; *Des*: I. Makhlis; *Music*: G. Popov; *Sound*: A. Bekker.

*Cast*: B. Babochkin, B. Blinov, V. Myasnikova, L. Kmit, Í. Pevtsov, S. Shkurat, V. Volkov, N. Simonov, B. Chirkov, G. Vassilyev.

*A Chip of an Empire* (Sovkino — Leningrad), 1929

*Script*: K. Vinogradskaya, F. Ermler; *Dir*: F. Ermler; *Phot*: E. Shneider; *Des*: E. Enei.

*Cast*: F. Nikitin, L. Semyonova, V. Solovtsev, Ya. Gudkin, V. Viskovsky, S. Gerasimov, V. Myasnikova.

*Circus* (Mosfilm), 1936

*Script* and *Dir*: G. Aleksandrov; *Phot*: V. Nilsen, B. Petrov; *Des*: G. Grivtsev; *Music*: I. Dunaevsky; *Sound*: N. Timartsev.

*Cast*: L. Orlova, E. Melnikova, V. Volodin, S. Stolyarov, P. Masalsky, A. Komissarov, F. Kurikhin, S. Antimonova, N. Otto, A. Panova, B. Karlin, Jim Peterson, M. Tsibulsky.

*Clear Skies* (Mosfilm), 1961

*Script*: D. Khrabrovitsky; *Dir*: G. Chukhrai; *Phot*: S. Poluyanov; *Des*: B. Nemechek; *Music*: M. Ziv; *Sound*: L. Bulgakov.

*Cast*: N. Drobysheva, E. Urbansky, N. Kuzmina, V. Konyaev, G. Kulikov, L. Knyazev, G. Georgiu, O. Tabakov, A. Krylov, V. Bondarev.

*The Communist* (Mosfilm), 1957

*Script*: E. Gabrilovich; *Dir*: Yu. Raizman; *Phot*: A. Shelenkov, Chen Yulan; *Des*: M. Bogdanov, G. Myasnikov; *Music*: R. Shchedrin; *Sound*: S. Minervin.

*Cast*: E. Urbansky, S. Pavlova, B. Smirnov, E. Shutov, S. Yakovlev, V. Zubkov, V. Kolpakov, V. Adrelov, A. Smirnov.

*Counter-Plan* (Rosfilm, Leningrad), 1932

*Script*: L. Arnshtam, D. Del, F. Ermler, S. Yutkevich; *Dir*: F. Ermler, S. Yutkevich; *Phot*: A. Ginzburg, Zh. Martov, V. Rapoport; *Des*: B. Durovsky-Eshke; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: I. Volk, M. Dmitriev.

*Cast*: V. Gardin, M. Blumental-Tamarina, T. Guretskaya, A. Abrikosov, B. Tenin, B. Poslavsky, M. Pototskaya, A. Alekseev, N. Koz-

lovsky, V. Sladkopevtsev, Ya. Gudkin, N. Michurin, F. Slavsky, P. Aleinikov, Z. Fedorova.

*The Cranes Are Flying* (Mosfilm), 1957

*Script*: V. Rozov; *Dir*: M. Kalatozov; *Phot*: S. Urusevsky; *Des*: E. Svidetelev; *Music*: M. Weinberg; *Sound*: I. Maiorov.

*Cast*: T. Samoilova, A. Batalov, V. Merkuryev, A. Shvorin, S. Kharitonova, and others.

## D

*Dauria* (Lenfilm), 1971

*Script*: Yu. Klepikov, V. Tregubovich; (from a novel of the same name by K. Sedykh); *Dir*: V. Tregubovich; *Phot*: E. Mezentsev; *Des*: G. Mekinyan; *Music*: G. Portnov; *Sound*: I. Chernyakhovskaya.

*Cast*: A. Trusov, V. Kuznetsova, V. Solomin, V. Shukshin, F. Odionkov, S. Golovina, E. Kopelyan.

*David bek* (Yerevan Studios), 1943

*Script*: A. Bek-Nazarov, Ya. Dukor, S. Arutyunyan, V. Solovyov; *Dir*: A. Bek-Nazarov; *Phot*: D. Feldman, A. Bek-Nazarov, *Des*: Arutchan; *Music*: A. Satyan; *Sound*: I. Grigirin.

*Cast*: Gr. Nersesyan, D. Malyan, A. Avetisyan, A. Zorabyan, V. Marguni, V. Ershov, T. Makhmurova, I. Perestiani, E. Samoilov, F. Davlatyan, G. Avetyan, M. Kostanyan, T. Aivazyan, Asmik, L. Shakhparonyan, D. Pogosyan.

*The Dawns Are Quiet Here* (Gorky Studios), 1972

*Script*: B. Vassilyev, S. Rostotsky; (from a story of the same name by B. Vassilyev); *Dir*: S. Rostotsky; *Phot*: V. Shumsky; *Des*: S. Serebrennikov; *Music*: K. Molchanov; *Sound*: I. Strokanov.

*Cast*: I. Shevchuk, O. Ostroumova, L. Zaitseva, E. Markova, A. Martynov, E. Dropeko.

*Don't Grieve* (Mosfilm and Gruzia-Film), 1969

*Script*: R. Gabriadze; *Dir*: G. Danelia; *Phot*: V. Yusov; *Des*: D. Takaishvili; *Music*: G. Kancheli; *Sound*: I. Zelentsova.

*Cast*: S. Zakariadze, V. Kikabidze, S. Chiaureli, A. Vertinskaya, L. Gudadze.

*Don Quixote* (Lenfilm), 1957

*Script*: E. Schwarz (from the novel of the same name by M. Cervantes); *Dir*: G. Kozintsev; *Phot*: A. Moskvina, A. Dudkov (studio), I. Gritsyus, E. Rozovsky (nature); *Des*: E. Enei; *Music*: K. Karavayev; *Sound*: I. Volk.

*Cast*: N. Cherkasov, Yu. Tolubeev, S. Birman, S. Grigoryeva, V. Kolpakov, L. Kasyanova, T. Agamirova, G. Vitsin, B. Freindlikh, L. Vertinskaya, G. Volchek, O. Viklandt, A. Beniaminov, S. Tsomaev.

*Dr. Pills-and-Powders-66* (Mosfilm), 1966

*Script*: V. Korostylev, R. Bykov; *Dir*: R. Bykov; *Phot*: G. Tsekavy, V. Yakushev; *Des*: A. Kuznetsov; *Music*: B. Chaikovsky; *Sound*: Yu. Rabinovich.

*Cast*: R. Bykov, O. Efremov, L. Knyazeva, E. Vassilyeva, A. Smirnov, F. Mkrtchyan.

## E

*Earth* (VUFKU — Kiev), 1930

*Script and Dir*: A. Dovzhenko; *Phot*: D. Demutsky; *Des*: V. Krichivsky.

*Cast*: S. Shkurat, S. Svashenko, Yu. Solntseva, P. Masokha, N. Nademsky, E. Maksimova.

*The Earth and People* (Gorky Studios), 1955

*Script*: G. Troepolsky; *Dir*: S. Rostotsky; *Phot*: G. Garibyan; *Des*: B. Dulenkov; *Music*: K. Molchanov; *Sound*: A. Izbutsky.

*Cast*: A. Egorov, E. Krivtsova, P. Aleinikov, I. Kuznetsov, M. Pugovkin, V. Telegina, S. Kharitonov, N. Grabbe, I. Areshina.

*The Earth Thirsts* (Vostokkino), 1930

*Script*: S. Ermolinsky; *Dir*: Yu. Raizman; *Phot*: L. Kosmatov, F. Timofeev.

*Cast*: K. Andronikashvili, L. Shneivais, A. Konsovsky, and others.

*The End of St. Petersburg* (Mezhrabpom-Rus), 1927

*Script*: N. Zarkhi; *Dir*: V. Pudovkin; *Phot*: A. Golovnya; *Des*: S. Kozlovsky.

*Cast*: A. Chistyakov, V. Baranovskaya, I. Chuvelev, V. Obolensky, S. Komarov, N. Zmelev, M. Tereshkovich, A. Gromov, V. Tsoppi, V. Pudovkin, V. Fogel.



*Exploded Inferno* (Gorky Studios), 1967

*Script:* A. Salynsky; *Dir:* I. Lukinsky; *Phot:* A. Kornilov; *Des:* A. Bessmertova; *Music:* A. Afanasiev; *Sound:* A. Izbutsky.

*Cast:* A. Afanasiev, G. Bortnikov, S. Yakovlev, N. Skorobogatov.

*Extraordinary Adventures of Mr. West in the Land of the Bolsheviks* (Goskino), 1924

*Script:* N. Aseev; *Dir:* L. Kuleshov; *Phot:* A. Levitsky; *Des:* V. Pudovkin.

*Cast:* P. Podobed, B. Barnet, A. Khokhlova, V. Pudovkin, S. Komarov, L. Obolensky, V. Lopatina, G. Kharlampiev, P. Galadzhhev, S. Sletov, V. Latyshevsky, A. Gorchilin, V. Fogel.

## F

*Falling Leaves* (Gruzia-Film), 1967

*Script:* A. Chichinadze; *Dir:* O. Ioseliani; *Phot:* A. Maisuradze; *Des:* D. Eristavi; *Music:* N. Ioseliani; *Sound:* S. Chitidze.

*Cast:* R. Georgobiani, M. Kartsivadze, G. Kharabadze.

*The Fate of a Man* (Mosfilm), 1959

*Script:* Yu. Lukin, F. Shakhmagonov (from a story of the same name by M. Sholokhov) *Dir:* S. Bondarchuk; *Phot:* V. Monakhov; *Des:* I. Novoderezhkin, S. Voronkov; *Music:* V. Basner; *Sound:* Yu. Mikhailov.

*Cast:* S. Bondarchuk, Pavlik Boriskin, Z. Kirienko, P. Volkov, Yu. Averin, K. Alekseev, P. Vinnikov, E. Teterin, A. Chemodurov, A. Novikov, L. Borisov, A. Kuznetsov, V. Ivanov.

*Father of a Soldier* (Gruzia-Film), 1964

*Script and Dir:* S. Zhgenti; *Dir:* R. Chkheidze; *Phot:* L. Sukhov, A. Filipashvili; *Des:* Z. Medzmariashvili, N. Kazbegi; *Music:* S. Tsin-tsadze; *Sound:* D. Lomidze.

*Cast:* S. Zakariadze, V. Privaltsev, A. Nazarov, A. Lebedev, V. Kolokoltsev, Yu. Drozdov, I. Kosykh, Vitya Kosykh, K. Bochorishvili, V. Pitsek, P. Lyubeshkin, T. Sapozhnikova, N. Barmin.

*A Fellow From Our Town* (TsOKS — Alma-Ata), 1942

*Script:* K. Simonov (from his play of the same name); *Dir:* A. Stol-

per, B. Ivanov; *Phot*: S. Uralov; *Des*: I. Shpinel, A. Weisfeld; *Music*: N. Kryukov; *Sound*: S. Klyuchevsky.

*Cast*: N. Kryuchkov, N. Bogolyubov, L. Smirnova, N. Mordvinov, V. Kandelaki, N. Zorskaya, V. Stepanov, V. Medvedev, A. Rumnev, P. Lyubeshkin, A. Alekseev.

*Fighter Planes* (Kiev Studios), 1939

*Script*: F. Knorre; *Dir*: E. Pentslin; *Phot*: N. Topchy; *Des*: N. Tryakin, M. Solokha; *Music*: N. Bogoslovsky; *Sound*: N. Avramenko, P. Shtro.

*Cast*: M. Bernes, V. Dashenko, E. Golynchik, A. Zagorsky.

*The First Teacher* (Kirghizfilm and Mosfilm), 1965

*Script*: Ch. Aitmatov, B. Dorodeev, with the participation of A. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky (from Aitmatov's story of the same name); *Dir*: A. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky; *Phot*: G. Rerberg; *Des*: M. Romadin; *Music*: V. Ovchinnikov; *Sound*: E. Kashkevich, S. Katsenelenbogen.

*Cast*: B. Beishenaliev, N. Arinbasarova, D. Kuyukova, I. Nogai-baev.

*Flyers* (Mosfilm), 1935

*Script*: A. Macheret; *Dir*: Yu. Raizman; *Phot*: L. Kosmatov; *Des*: G. Grivtsov; *Music*: N. Kryukov; *Sound*: V. Bogdankevich.

*Cast*: B. Shchukin, I. Koval-Samborsky, E. Melnikova, A. Chistyakov, and others.

*The Forty-First* (Mezhrabpom-Rus), 1927

*Script*: B. Lavrenev, B. Leonidov; *Dir*: Ya. Protazanov; *Phot*: P. Ermolaev; *Des*: S. Kozlovsky.

*Cast*: A. Voitsik, I. Koval-Samborsky, M. Shtraukh, and others.

## G

*Georgy Saakadze* (Part I—1942; Part II—1943), Tbilisi Studios

*Script*: A. Antonovskaya, B. Cherny; *Dir*: M. Chiaureli; *Phot*: A. Dig, L. Mamaladze; *Music*: A. Balanchivadze, U. Gadzhibekov; *Sound*: V. Dolidze, L. Lomidze.

*Cast*: A. Khorava, V. Andzhaparidze, L. Asatiani, M. Kokocha-

shvili, M. Marashidze, G. Mgeladze, Z. Lezhava, S. Bagashvili, M. Dzhaparidze, N. Mamuashvili, G. Shavgulidze, K. Koralashvili, M. Sukhitashvili, A. Sukhitashvili, A. Vassadze, M. Chikhladze, A. Lusinyan, G. Roseva, K. Daushvili, G. Pronispireli, I. Perestiani, G. Davitashvili.

*A Great Citizen* (Part I—Lenfilm), 1937

*Script*: M. Bleiman, M. Bolshintsov, F. Ermler; *Dir*: F. Ermler; *Phot*: A. Kaltsaty; *Des*: A. Vexler, S. Meinkin, N. Suvorov; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: I. Dmitriev.

*Cast*: N. Bogolyubov, I. Bersenev, O. Zhakov, Z. Fedorova, B. Poslavsky, G. Semyonov, S. Ryabinkin, A. Zrazhevsky, E. Altus, P. Kirillov, B. Chirkov, E. Nemchenko, V. Kiselev, N. Raiskaya-Dore, P. Rashevskaya, A. Polibin.

(Part II—Lenfilm), 1939

*Script*: M. Bolshintsev, M. Bleiman, F. Ermler; *Dir*: F. Ermler, A. Kaltsaty; *Des*: S. Meinkin, M. Korotkin; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: I. Dmitriev.

*Cast*: N. Bogolyubov, A. Zrazhevsky, Z. Fedorova, G. Semyonov, I. Raiskaya-Dore, I. Kuznetsov, L. Emelyantseva, O. Zhakov, I. Berse-  
nev, Yu. Tolubeev.

*A Great Life* (Part I—Kiev Studios), 1939

*Script*: P. Nilin; *Dir*: L. Lukov; *Phot*: I. Shekker; *Des*: S. Zaritsky; *Music*: N. Bogoslovsky; *Sound*: G. Grigoryev, R. Bisnovataya.

*Cast*: I. Peltser, I. Novoseltsev, S. Kayukov, Yu. Lavrov, M. Bernes, V. Shershneva, B. Andreev, P. Aleinikov, L. Kartashova, L. Masokha, B. Zaichikov, V. Arkasov, G. Lyubimov.

(Part II—Soyuzdetfilm), 1946

*Script*: P. Nilin; *Dir*: L. Lukov; *Phot*: M. Kirillov; *Des*: F. Boguslavsky, V. Kaplunovsky; *Music*: N. Bogoslovsky; *Sound*: L. Kann.

*Cast*: V. Shershneva, L. Smirnova, A. Popova, L. Kartashova, B. Andreev, P. Aleinikov, M. Bernes, L. Masokha, S. Kayukov, I. Peltser, A. Krasnopsky, Yu. Lavrov, S. Blinnikov, G. Andreeva, A. Konsovsky, B. Dorofeev, A. Dunaisky.

## H

*Hamlet* (2 Parts—Lenfilm), 1964

*Script and Dir:* G. Kozintsev (from Shakespeare's tragedy of the same name); *Phot:* I. Gritsius; *Des:* E. Enei, G. Kropachev, S. Virsaladze; *Music:* D. Shostakovich; *Sound:* B. Khutoryansky.

*Cast:* I. Smoktunovsky, M. Nazvanov, E. Radzin, Yu. Tolubeev, A. Vertinskaya, V. Erenberg, S. Oleksenko, V. Medvedev, I. Dmitriev, A. Krevald, V. Kolpakov, A. Chekaevsky, R. Aren, Yu. Berkun, A. Lauter.

*Harmonica* (Mezhrabpomfilm), 1934

*Script:* A. Zharov, I. Savchenko (from A. Zharov's poem 'Harmonica'); *Dir:* I. Savchenko; *Phot:* E. Shneider, Yu. Fogelman; *Des:* V. Khmeleva; *Music:* S. Pototsky; *Sound:* E. Derun.

*Cast:* Z. Fedorova, P. Savin, I. Savchenko, N. Yarochkin, N. Zryanov, P. Gorelov, V. Sataeva, E. Yukhov, E. Pirogova

*The Heights* (Mosfilm), 1957

*Script:* M. Papava (from E. Vorobyov's novel of the same name); *Dir:* A. Zarkhi; *Phot:* V. Monakhov; *Des:* A. Freidin; *Music:* R. Shchedrin; *Sound:* V. Kirshenbaum.

*Cast:* N. Rybnikov, I. Makarova, G. Karnovich-Valua, V. Makarov, M. Strizhenova, B. Sitko, S. Romodanov, E. Maksimova, L. Borisov, L. Chubarov, Kh. Abramyan, V. Pobol, V. Pechnikov, E. Zinoviev, M. Vorobyov.

*Heir to Genghis-Khan* (Mezhrabpomfilm), 1928

*Script:* O. Brik (from a novel of the same name by I. Novokshonov); *Dir:* V. Pudovkin; *Phot:* A. Golovnya; *Des:* S. Kozlovsky, M. Aranson; *Music:* N. Kryukov.

*Cast:* V. Inknizhinov, A. Dedintsev, L. Belinskaya, A. Sudakevich, V. Tsoppi, K. Guryak, A. Chistyakov, F. Ivanov, B. Barnet.

*The House I Live In* (Gorky Studios), 1957

*Script:* I. Olshansky; *Dir:* L. Kulidzhanov, Ya. Segel; *Phot:* V. Shumsky; *Des:* N. Bogomolov; *Music:* Yu. Biryukov; *Sound:* D. Belevich.

*Cast:* V. Telegina, N. Elizarova, E. Matveev, V. Zemlyanikin, Yura Myasnikov, R. Shorokhova, P. Shalnov, M. Ulyanov, N. Myshkova, K. Elanskaya, Zh. Bolotova, Z. Danilina, K. Alperova, L. Kulidzhanov, P. Postnikova, L. Smirnova, E. Mazurova.

*How the Steel Was Tempered* (Dovzhenko Studios), 1975

*Script:* A. Alov, V. Naumov; (from a novel of the same name by N. Ostrovsky) *Dir:* N. Mashchenko; *Phot:* A. Ityginov; *Des:* V. Zhilko, E. Shcheikin; *Music:* I. Shamo.

*Cast:* V. Konkin, K. Stepankov, F. Panasenکو, N. Saiko.

## I

*I Am Twenty* (Two Parts—Gorky Studios), 1964

*Script:* M. Khutsiev, G. Shpalikov; *Dir:* M. Khutsiev; *Phot:* M. Pilikhina; *Des:* I. Zakharova; *Music:* N. Sidelnikov; *Sound:* A. Izbutsky.

*Cast:* V. Popov, N. Gubenko, S. Lyubshin, M. Vertinskaya, Z. Zinoviev, S. Starikova, L. Prygunov, T. Bogdanov, L. Solyanskaya, Sasha Blinov, L. Zolotukhin, P. Shcherbakov, G. Nekrasov, N. Zakharchenko.

*The Idiot* (Part I, *Nastasya Filippovna*—Mosfilm), 1958

*Script and Dir:* I. Pyriev (from F. Dostoevsky's novel); *Phot:* V. Pavlov; *Des:* S. Volkov; *Music:* N. Kryukov; *Sound:* E. Indlina.

*Cast:* Yu. Yakovlev, Yu. Borisova, N. Podgorny, R. Maksimova, V. Pashennaya, K. Polovikova, I. Lyubeznov, S. Martinson, G. Spigel, L. Parkhomenko, N. Pazhitnov.

*Ilya Muromets* (Mosfilm), 1956

*Script:* M. Kochnov; *Dir:* A. Ptushko; *Phot:* F. Provorov, Yu. Kun; *Des:* E. Kumankov, *Music:* N. Morozov; *Sound:* M. Blyakhina, V. Bogdankevich.

*Cast:* B. Andreev, A. Abrikosov, N. Medvedeva, N. Myshkova, A. Shvorin, S. Martinson, G. Demin, S. Stolyarov.

*An Intelligence Officer's Feat* (Kiev Studios), 1947

*Script:* M. Bleiman, K. Isaev, M. Maklyarsky; *Dir:* B. Barnet; *Phot:* D. Demutsky; *Des:* M. Umansky; *Music:* D. Klebanov, O. Sandler; *Sound:* A. Babi.

*Cast:* P. Kadochnikov, E. Izmailova, A. Buchma, S. Petrov, D. Milyutenko, S. Martinson, V. Khalatov, V. Derga, P. Arzhanov, V. Dobrovolsky, M. Romanov, B. Barnet, V. Ulesova, A. Bykov.

*Invasion* (TsOKS—Alma-Ata), 1944

*Script:* B. Chirskov (from a play of the same name by L. Leonov);

*Dir:* M. Romm; *Phot:* S. Ivanov; *Des:* L. Milchman, L. Shildknecht;  
*Music:* Yu. Biryukov; *Sound:* I. Dmitriev.

*Cast:* V. Gremin, O. Zhizneva, O. Zhakov, L. Glazova, Z. Morskaya, L. Shabalina, V. Valersky, V. Vanin, G. Spigel, S. Astafyev, M. Eppelbaum.

*Ivan* (Ukrainfilm), 1932

*Script and Dir:* A. Dovzhenko; *Dir:* Yu. Solntseva; *Phot:* D. Demutsky, Yu. Ekelchik, M. Glider; *Des:* Yu. Khomaza; *Music:* I. Belza, Yu. Meitus, B. Lyatoshinsky.

*Cast:* P. Masokha, S. Shagaida, G. Yura, L. Yaroshenko, A. Khvylya.

*Ivan's Childhood* (Mosfilm), 1962

*Script:* V. Bogomolov, M. Papava (from V. Bogomolov's story 'Ivan'); *Dir:* A. Tarkovsky; *Phot:* V. Yusov, *Des:* E. Chernyaev; *Music:* V. Ovchinnikov; *Sound:* E. Zelentsova.

*Cast:* Kolya Burlyaev, V. Zubkov, E. Zharikov, S. Krylov, N. Grinko, V. Malyavina, I. Tarkovskaya.

*Ivan the Terrible* (Part I—TsOKS, Alma-Ata), 1944

(Part II—Mosfilm), 1945

*Script and Dir:* S. Eisenstein; *Phot:* A. Moskvina, E. Tisse; *Des:* I. Shpinel; *Music:* S. Prokofiev; *Sound:* V. Bogdankevich, B. Volsky.

*Cast:* N. Cherkasov, L. Tselikovskaya, S. Birman, P. Kadochnikov, M. Zharov, A. Buchma, M. Kuznetsov, M. Nazvanov, A. Abrikosov, V. Pudovkin, and others.

## J

*Jolly Fellows* (Moskinokombinat), 1934

*Script:* V. Mass, N. Erdman, G. Aleksandrov; *Dir:* G. Aleksandrov; *Phot:* V. Nilsen; *Des:* A. Utkin; *Music:* I. Dunaevsky; *Songs:* V. Lebedev-Kumach; *Sound:* N. Timartsev.

*Cast:* L. Utesov, L. Orlova, M. Strelkova, E. Tyapkina, F. Kurikhin, G. Arnold, R. Erdman, L. Utesov Jazz Group.

*The Journalist* (Two Parts—Gorky Studios), 1967

*Script and Dir:* S. Gerasimov; *Phot:* V. Rapoport; *Des:* P. Galadzhiev; *Music:* P. Chekalov; *Sound:* V. Khlobynin.

*Cast:* Yu. Vassilyev, G. Polskikh, N. Fedosova, I. Lapikov, S. Ni-

konenko, Yu. Daniyalov, A. Kryzhansky, T. Makarova, S. Gerasimov, V. Telichkina.

*July Rain* (Mosfilm), 1966

*Script*: A. Grebnev, M. Khutsiev; *Dir*: M. Khutsiev; *Phot*: G. Lavrov; *Des*: G. Kolganov; *Sound*: B. Vengerovsky; *Songs*: B. Okudzhava, Yu. Vizbor.

*Cast*: E. Uralova, A. Belyavsky, Yu. Vizbor, E. Kozyreva, A. Mitta, I. Bylinkin, Yu. Ilchuk, A. Pokrovskaya, B. Belousov, V. Beskova, V. Sharykina, V. Belyakov.

## K

*The Karamazov Brothers* (Three Parts — Mosfilm), 1968

*Script and Dir*: I. Pyriev (3rd Part completed by M. Ulyanov, K. Lavrov); *Phot*: S. Vronsky; *Des*: S. Volkov; *Music*: I. Shvarts; *Sound*: E. Kashkevich.

*Cast*: M. Ulyanov, L. Pyrieva, K. Lavrov, A. Myagkov, M. Prudkin, S. Korkoshko, V. Nikulin, A. Pavlenko, N. Svetlovidov, A. Abrikosov, G. Yukhtin, N. Podgorny, V. Matov, I. Vlasov, G. Kolpakov, E. Urusova, S. Chekan, A. Danilova, O. Chuvaeva, I. Lapikov, A. Khvylya, N. Ryzhov.

*Katka's Reinette Apples* (Sovkino — Leningrad), 1926

*Script*: M. Borisoglebsky, B. Leonidov; *Dir*: E. Ioganson, F. Ermler; *Phot*: E. Mikhailov, A. Moskvina; *Des*: E. Enei.

*Cast*: V. Buzhinskaya, B. Chernova, V. Solovtsov, Ya. Gudkin, F. Nikitin, T. Okova, V. Plotnikova.

*Keto and Kote* (Tbilisi Studios), 1948

*Script*: S. Pashaliashvili; *Dir*: V. Tabliashvili, Sh. Gedevanishvili; *Phot*: A. Dagmelov; *Des*: I. Sumatashvili; *Music*: A. Kerseladze; *Sound*: R. Laginsky.

*Cast*: M. Dzhnanaridze, V. Kravishvili, P. Aligrashvili.

*King Lear* (Two Parts — Lenfilm), 1970

*Script and Dir*: G. Kozintsev; *Phot*: I. Gritsius; *Des*: E. Enei, V. Ulitkov, S. Virsaladze; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: E. Vannunts; *Trans*: B. Pasternak; *Fool's Songs* — (S. Marshak).

*Cast*: Yu. Yarvet, E. Radzin, G. Volchek, V. Shendrikova, O. Dal, K. Sebris, L. Merzin, R. Adomaitis, V. Emelyanov, A. Vokach, D. Banionis, A. Petrenko, Yu. Budraitis.

*Komsomolsk* (Lenfilm), 1938

*Script*: Z. Markina, M. Vitukhnovsky, S. Gerasimov; *Dir*: S. Gerasimov; *Phot*: A. Ginzburg; *Des*: V. Semyonov; *Music*: V. Pushkov; *Sound*: E. Nesterov, A. Shargorodsky.

*Cast*: T. Makarova, I. Novoseltsev, N. Kryuchkov, P. Volkov, S. Krylov, I. Kuznetsov, P. Aleinikov, V. Telegina, A. Polibin, A. Matveeva, E. Golynchik, V. Kulakov, G. Zhzhenov, B. Khaidarov, Z. Nakhshkiev, N. Litvinov, S. Gerasimov.

*Kutuzov* (Mosfilm), 1943

*Script*: V. Solovyov; *Dir*: V. Petrov; *Phot*: M. Gindin; *Des*: V. Egorov; *Music*: Yu. Shaporin; *Sound*: A. Korobov.

*Cast*: A. Diky, N. Okhlopkov, S. Zakariadze, V. Gotovtsev, S. Mezinsky, E. Kaluzhsky, N. Brilling, A. Polyakov, I. Timchenko, N. Ryzhov, S. Blinnikov, K. Shilovtsev, B. Chirkov, V. Ershov, I. Skuratov, M. Pugovkin, A. Stepanova, G. Terekhov.

## L

*Lady with the Little Dog* (Lenfilm), 1960

*Script and Dir*: I. Heifits (from a story of the same name by A. Chekhov); *Phot*: A. Moskvina, D. Meskhiev; *Dir*: S. Derevyansky; *Des*: B. Manevich, I. Kaplan; *Music*: N. Simonyan; *Sound*: A. Shargorodsky.

*Cast*: I. Savvina, A. Batalov, N. Alisova, D. Zebrov, P. Krymov, Yu. Medvedev, T. Rozanov, Yu. Svirin, V. Erenberg, and others.

*The Last Night* (Mosfilm), 1936

*Script*: E. Gabrilovich, Yu. Raizman (from Gabrilovich's story 'Quiet Brovkin'); *Dir*: Yu. Raizman; *Asst. Dir*: D. Vassiliev; *Phot*: D. Feldman; *Des*: A. Utkin; *Music*: A. Veprik; *Sound*: V. Bogdankevich.

*Cast*: I. Peltser, M. Yarotskaya, N. Dorokhin, V. Popov, A. Konsovsky, V. Gribkov, N. Rybnikov, S. Vecheslov, T. Okunevskaya, L. Knyazev, M. Kholodov, O. Abdulov, A. Kovalevsky, I. Arkadin.

*Lenin in 1918* (Mosfilm), 1939

*Script*: A. Kapler, T. Zlatogorova; *Dir*: M. Romm; *Phot*: B. Volchek; *Des*: B. Dubrovsky-Eshke; V. Ivanov; *Music*: N. Kryukov; *Sound*: S. Minervin.



*Cast:* B. Shchukin, N. Bogolyubov, N. Cherkasov, V. Markov, L. Lyubashevsky, G. Bogatov, Z. Dobina, N. Okhlopkov.

*Lenin in October* (Mosfilm), 1937

*Script:* A. Kapler; *Dir:* M. Romm; *Asst. Dir:* D. Vassiliev; *Phot:* B. Volchek; *Des:* B. Dubrovsky-Eshke, N. Solovyov; *Music:* A. Aleksandrov; *Sound:* V. Bogdankevich.

*Cast:* B. Shchukin, S. Goldshtab, V. Pokrovsky, N. Okhlopkov, V. Vanin, A. Kovalevsky, E. Shatrova, and others.

*Lenin in Poland* (Joint Polish-Soviet Production), 1965

*Script:* E. Gabrilovich, S. Yutkevich; *Dir:* S. Yutkevich; *Phot:* Ya. Lyaskovsky; *Des:* Jan Grandys; *Music:* A. Valyachinsky; *Sound:* Yu. Bartchak.

*Cast:* M. Shtraukh, A. Lisyanskaya, A. Pavlysheva, I. Kusmerskaya, E. Fetting, K. Kalchinsky, and others.

*Liberation* (Five films)

*The Fiery Bulge*, 1969, *The Break-Through*, 1970, (Mosfilm)

*Main Thrust* (Two Parts), Mosfilm, 1970

*Battle for Berlin, The Last Storming* (Mosfilm in coop. with the GDR, Poland and Italy), 1971

*Script:* Yu. Bondarev, O. Kurganov, Yu. Ozerov; *Dir:* Yu. Ozerov; *Phot:* I. Slabnevich; *Des:* A. Myagkov; *Music:* Yu. Levitin; *Sound:* E. Kashkevich, Yu. Mikhailov, E. Indelina.

*Cast:* B. Zakariadze, M. Ulyanov, V. Davydov, E. Burenkov, S. Kharchenko, V. Shukshin, L. Golubkina, N. Olyalin, V. Strzhelchik, I. Garrani, G. Henneberg, S. Weiss, H. Hasse, F. Dietz, P. Sturm, H. Giese, A. Struve, E. Stecher, V. Wieland, H. Krüger, A. Waller, I. Klose, G. Steiger, D. Olbrychski, B. Brylska, and others.

*The Little Crane* (Mosfilm), 1968

*Script:* D. Vassiliu (from a story by M. Alekseev); *Dir:* N. Moskalenko; *Phot:* N. Olonovsky; *Des:* V. Izerbik; *Music:* Yu. Levitin; *Sound:* Yu. Bulgakova.

*Cast:* L. Chursina, N. Mordyukova, T. Peltser, R. Markova, A. Dzhigarkhanyan, N. Gritsenko, V. Tikhonov, E. Shutov.

*The Living and the Dead* (Two Parts — Mosfilm), 1963

*Script* and *Dir*: A. Stolper (from the novel of the same name by K. Simonov); *Phot*: N. Olonovsky; *Des*: S. Volkov; *Sound*: V. Leshchev.

*Cast*: K. Lavrov, A. Papanov, A. Glazyrin, O. Efremov, L. Krylova, L. Lyubimova, L. Lyubetsky, and others.

## M

*Magdana's Donkey* (Gruzia-Film), 1955

*Script*: K. Gogodze; *Dir*: T. Abduladze, R. Chkheidze; *Phot*: L. Sukhov, A. Digmelov; *Des*: I. Sumbatashvili; *Music*: A. Kereselidze; *Sound*: R. Kezeli.

*Cast*: D. Tserodze, A. Kvantaliani, M. Barashvili, L. Monstsrapishvili, N. Chikvinidze, K. Sakadelidze, and others.

*Man No. 217* (Mosfilm and Tashkent Studios), 1944

*Script*: E. Gabrilovich, M. Romm; *Dir*: M. Romm; *Phot*: B. Volchek, E. Savelyeva; *Des*: E. Enei, A. Freidin; *Music*: A. Khachatryan; *Sound*: S. Minervin.

*Cast*: E. Kuzmina, A. Lisyansky, V. Zaichikov, N. Komissarov, E. Mikhailov, V. Vladislavsky, T. Barysheva, L. Sukharevskaya, P. Sukhanov, G. Graif, V. Balashov.

*Man With a Gun* (Lenfilm), 1938

*Script*: N. Pogodin; *Dir*: S. Yutkevich; *Phot*: I. Martov; *Des*: A. Blek; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: K. Gordon.

*Cast*: M. Shtraukh, M. Gelovani, B. Tenin, V. Lukin, Z. Fyodorova, B. Chirkov, N. Cherkasov, N. Sosnin, S. Birman, M. Bernes, S. Kayukov, A. Andreev, P. Sukhanov, K. Sorokin, N. Kryuchkov.

*Marina's Fate* (Kiev Studios), 1953

*Script*: L. Kompaniets; *Dir*: I. Shmaruk, V. Ivchenko, *Phot*: V. Voitenko; *Des*: G. Prokopets, N. Yurov; *Music*: G. Zhukovsky; *Sound*: N. Avramenko.

*Cast*: E. Litvinenko, N. Gritsenko, T. Konyukhova, A. Serdyuk, M. Kuznetsov, B. Andreev, N. Koperzhinskaya, R. Manukovskaya, L. Bykov, M. Zadneprovsky, R. Makagonova, V. Chaika, L. Ivanova.

*Maryte* (Mosfilm), 1947

*Script*: F. Knorre; *Dir*: V. Stroeve; *Phot*: E. Andrikanis, G. Pysh-

kova; *Des*: A. Parkhomenko, V. Kamsky; *Music*: V. Dvarionas; *Sound*: V. Zorin.

*Cast*: T. Lennikova, M. Gromyko, N. Latsius, L. Binkite, N. Chaplygin, B. Kiselis, N. Siparis, M. Astangov, N. Grabbe, Yu. Petrauskas, N. Plotnikov, E. Kondratyeva, N. Malishevsky, A. Popov, V. Koltsov, B. Balashov, F. Ivanov, K. Kimonaite, A. Lukyanov.

*Maxim's Youth (The Bolshevik — Lenfilm)*, 1934

*Script and Dir*: G. Kozintsev, L. Trauberg; *Phot*: A. Moskvina; *Des*: E. Enei; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: I. Volk.

*Cast*: B. Chirkov, S. Kayukov, A. Kulakov, V. Kibardina, M. Tarlakhov, M. Schelkovsky, S. Leontiev, P. Volkov, B. Blinov, V. Sladkopevtsev.

*Meeting on the Elbe (Mosfilm)*, 1949

*Script*: Tur brothers and L. Sheinin; *Dir*: G. Aleksandrov; *Phot*: E. Tisse.

*Cast*: V. Davydov, K. Nassonov, B. Andreev, M. Nazvanov, L. Orlova, I. Lyubeznov, V. Vladislavsky, F. Ranevskaya, E. Garin, S. Tsepin, Yu. Yurovsky, V. Kulakov.

*Michurin (Mosfilm)*, 1948

*Script and Dir*: A. Dovzhenko; *Phot*: L. Kosmatov, Yu. Kun; *Des*: M. Bogdanov, G. Myasnikov; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: N. Timartsev.

*Cast*: V. Solovyov, G. Belov, A. Vassilyeva, N. Shamin, F. Grigoriev, M. Zharov, K. Nassonov, A. Zhiltsov, I. Nazarov, V. Khokhryakov, D. Dubov, G. Pechnikov, V. Isaev, S. Tsenin, Yu. Lyubimov, I. Kashirin.

*Miners (Lenfilm)*, 1937

*Script*: A. Kapler; *Dir*: S. Yutkevich; *Phot*: I. Martov, *Des*: Abidin-Dino, O. Pchelnikova; *Music*: B. Golts; *Sound*: M. Sher.

*Cast*: B. Poslavsky, Yu. Tolubeev, V. Lukin, N. Rusinova, Z. Fyodorova, A. Matov, M. Bernes, G. Gorbunov, and others.

*Minin and Pozharsky (Mosfilm)*, 1939

*Script*: V. Shklovsky (from a story by V. Shklovsky, *Russians in the Seventeenth Century*); *Dir*: V. Pudovkin, M. Doller; *Phot*: A. Golovnya; *Des*: A. Utkin; *Music*: Yu. Shaporin; *Sound*: E. Nestorov.

*Cast:* A. Khanov, B. Livanov, B. Chirkov, A. Goryunov, L. Sverdlin, V. Moskvina, S. Komarov, E. Kaluzhsky, L. Fenin, M. Astangov, I. Chuveley, V. Dorofeev, E. Gurov, E. Kuzyurina, N. Nikitina, N. Nikitich, P. Sobolevsky.

*Mother* (Mezhrabpom-Rus), 1926

*Script:* N. Zarkhi (from the novel of the same name by M. Gorky);

*Dir:* V. Pudovkin; *Phot:* A. Golovnya; *Des:* S. Kozlovsky; *Sound:* V. Dmitriev.

*Cast:* V. Baranovskaya, N. Batalov, A. Chistyakov, I. Koval-Samborsky, V. Pudovkin, A. Zemtsova, N. Vidonov, V. Savitsky, F. Ivanov, I. Bobrov, V. Uralsky, A. Gromov.

*A Mother's Constancy* (Gorky Studios), 1966

*Script:* Z. Voskresenskaya, I. Donskaya; *Dir:* M. Donskoy; *Phot:* M. Yakovich; *Des:* B. Dulenkov; *Music:* V. Khozak; *Sound:* A. Dikan.

*Cast:* E. Fadeeva, N. Menshikova, R. Nakhapetov, G. Chertov, Yu. Solomin, T. Loginova, A. Moskaleva, E. Kapustina, N. Fedosova, V. Shakhov, G. Epifantsev, Yu. Bykov, A. Tsinman, V. Emelyanov, P. Tarasov.

*Mussorgsky* (Lenfilm), 1950

*Script:* A. Abramova, G. Roshal; *Dir:* G. Roshal; *Phot:* M. Magid, L. Sokolsky; *Des:* N. Suvorov, A. Vexler; *Music:* D. Kabalevsky; *Sound:* A. Shargorodsky.

*Cast:* A. Borisov, N. Cherkasov, V. Balashov, A. Popov, Yu. Leonidov, B. Freindlikh, F. Nikitin, L. Orlova, L. Shtykan, V. Ushakova, G. Orlov, V. Morozov, L. Sukharevskaya, V. Bezzubenko, V. Safronov, K. Adashevsky, L. Fenin, G. Shpigel, G. Georgiu, A. Vassilyeva.

## N

*A Nest of the Gentry* (Mosfilm), 1969

*Script:* V. Ezhov (from a novel of the same name by I. Turgenev); *Dir:* A. Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky; *Phot:* G. Rerberg; *Des:* A. Boim, N. Dvigubsky, M. Romadin; *Music:* V. Ovchinnikov; *Sound:* R. Margacheva.

*Cast:* I. Kupchenko, B. Tyszkiewicz, T. Chernova, V. Sergachev, V. Merkuryev, M. Durasova, L. Kulagin.

*The New Babylon* (Sovkino, Leningrad), 1929

*Script and Dir:* G. Kozintsev, L. Trauberg; *Phot:* A. Moskvina; *Des:* E. Enei, *Music:* D. Shostakovich.

*Cast:* E. Kuzmina, P. Sobolevsky, D. Gutman, S. Magarill, G. Gerasimov, S. Gusev, Ya. Zheimo, A. Glushkova, E. Chervyakova, A. Kostrichkin, A. Zarzhitskaya, V. Pudovkin, O. Zhakov, L. Semyonova, A. Arnold.

*Nine Days in One Year* (Mosfilm), 1961

*Script:* M. Romm, D. Khrabrovitsky; *Dir:* M. Romm; *Phot:* G. Lavrov; *Des:* G. Kolganov; *Music:* D. Ter-Tatevosyan; *Sound:* B. Volsky.

*Cast:* A. Batalov, I. Smoktunovsky, T. Lavrova, N. Plotnikov, S. Blinnikov, E. Evstigneev, M. Kozakov, I. Rabbe, V. Nikulin, P. Springfield, A. Pelevin, E. Teterin, N. Sergeev, A. Voitsik, V. Belyaeva, L. Ovchinnikova, *Narrator:* Z. Gerdt.

*No Ford in Fire* (Lenfilm), 1967

*Script:* E. Gabrilovich, G. Panfilov; *Dir:* G. Panfilov; *Phot:* D. Dolinin; *Des:* M. Gaukhman-Sverdlov; *Music:* V. Bibergan; *Sound:* G. Salye.

*Cast:* I. Churikova, A. Solonitsyn, M. Gluzsky, M. Bulgakova, A. Marenich, V. Kashpur, E. Lebedev, M. Kononov, V. Beroev, M. Kokshenov.

*Normandy-Neman* (Joint Soviet-French Production), 1960

*Script:* Sh. Spaak, E. Triolet, K. Simonov; *Dir:* J. Dreuil; *Des:* A. Parkhomenko; *Music:* R. Shchedrin; *Sound:* B. Volsky.

*Cast:* V. Doronin, N. Lebedev, V. Gusev, N. Rybnikov, Jean-Claude Michel, George Riviere.

## O

*October* (Sovkino — Moscow and Leningrad), 1927

*Script and Dir:* S. Eisenstein, G. Aleksandrov; *Phot:* E. Tisse; *Des:* V. Kovrigin; *Asst. Dir:* M. Shtraukh, M. Gomorov, L. Trauberg.

*Cast:* V. Nikandrov, N. Popov, B. Livanov, E. Tisse.

*Off Season* (Two Parts — Lenfilm), 1968

*Script:* V. Vladimirov, A. Shlepyanov; *Dir:* S. Kulish; *Phot:* A. Chechulin; *Des:* E. Gukov; *Music:* A. Volkonsky; *Sound:* G. Gavrilova.

*Cast:* D. Banionis, R. Bykov, S. Kurilov, G. Yukhtin, B. Freindlikh, A. Eskola, L. Merzin, E. Koppel, M. Raus, V. Erenberg, Yu. Yarovet.

*One Soldier, Two Soldiers... (Aty-Baty...)* (Dovzhenko Studios), 1976

*Script:* B. Vassilyev, K. Rapoport; *Dir:* L. Bykov; *Phot:* V. Voitenko; *Des:* G. Prokopets; *Music:* G. Dmitriev.

*Cast:* L. Bykov, V. Konkin, E. Shanina, L. Bakshtaev, I. Gavrilyuk, N. Sektenenko, A. Ganiev, V. Yantbelidze, N. Naum.

*Ordinary Fascism* (Mosfilm), 1965

*Script:* M. Romm, M. Turovskaya, Yu. Khanyutin; *Dir:* M. Romm; *Phot:* G. Lavrov, V. Fakov, B. Pluzhnikov.

*Othello* (Mosfilm), 1955

*Script and Dir:* S. Yutkevich (from Shakespeare's tragedy); *Phot:* E. Andrikanis; *Des:* A. Weisfeld, V. Dorrer, M. Karyagin; *Music:* A. Khachaturyan; *Sound:* B. Volsky.

*Cast:* S. Bondarchuk, A. Popov, I. Skobtseva, V. Soshalsky, E. Vesnik, A. Maksimova, E. Teterin, M. Troyanovsky, A. Kelberer, I. Brilling, and others.

*Our Courtyard* (Gruzia-Film), 1956

*Script:* G. Mdivani; *Dir:* R. Chkheidze; *Phot:* G. Chelidze; *Des:* G. Gigauri, K. Khutsishvili; *Music:* A. Kereselidze; *Sound:* R. Kezeli.

*Cast:* S. Chiaureli, G. Shengelaya, L. Abashidze, L. Piltsani, G. Abashidze, D. Tserodze, A. Kvantaliani, S. Takaishvili, N. Piranishvili, K. Mgaloblishvili, E. Gudavadze, T. Abashidze, N. Davitashvili.

*Our Home* (Mosfilm), 1965

*Script:* E. Grigoryev; *Dir:* V. Pronin; *Phot:* E. Savelyeva; *Music:* N. Karetnikov; *Sound:* A. Ryabov.

*Cast:* A. Papanov, N. Sazonova, V. Beroev, A. Loktev, G. Bortnikov, I. Lapikov, N. Kornienko.

*Outskirts* (Mezhrabpomfilm), 1933

*Script:* K. Finn, B. Barnet (from a story of the same name by K. Finn); *Dir:* B. Barnet; *Phot:* M. Kirillov, A. Spiridonov; *Des:* S. Kozlovsky; *Music:* S. Visilenko; *Sound:* L. Obolensky, N. Ozornov.

*Cast:* S. Komarov, E. Kuzmina, R. Erdman, A. Chistyakov, N. Bogolyubov, N. Kryuchkova, A. Ermakov, N. Akimov, M. Zharov, G. Klering, A. Fait, D. Vvedensky, V. Uralsky, M. Yanshin.

## P

*Parisian Cobbler* (Sovkino — Leningrad), 1927

*Script:* N. Nikitin, B. Leonidov; *Dir:* F. Ermler; *Phot:* and *Des:* E. Mikhailov, G. Bushtuev.

*Cast:* F. Nikitin, V. Solovtsev, V. Buzhinskaya, B. Chernova, Ya. Gudkin, V. Myasnikova, S. Antonov, O. Gortseva, V. Plotnikov, A. Melnikov.

*Party Card* (Mosfilm), 1936

*Script:* K. Vinogradskaya; *Dir:* I. Pyriev; *Phot:* A. Solodkov; *Des:* V. Rakhals; *Music:* V. Zhelobinsky; *Sound:* V. Leshchev.

*Cast:* A. Voitsik, A. Abrikosov, I. Maleev, A. Goryunov, S. Antimonov, M. Yarotskaya, E. Chesnokova, I. Fedorova, S. Tsenin.

*Pavel Korchagin* (Kiev Studios), 1956

*Script:* K. Isaev (from N. Ostrovsky's novel, *How the Steel Was Tempered*); *Dir:* A. Alov, V. Naumov; *Phot:* I. Minkovetsky, S. Shakhbazyan; *Des:* V. Agranov; *Music:* Yu. Shurovsky; *Sound:* A. Fedorenko.

*Cast:* V. Lanovoy, E. Lezhdei, T. Stradina, V. Marenkov, P. Usov-nichenko, D. Milyutenko, A. Lebedev, L. Perfilov, V. Stepanov, L. Piktorskaya, D. Varenyuk, N. Grinko, E. Mikhailov, L. Parkhomenko, A. Rogovtseva, K. Stepankov, V. Telegina, G. Teslya, L. Usach, F. Yavorsky.

*People and Beasts* (Two Parts — Gorky Studios, USSR and DEFA Studios, GDR), 1962

*Script and Dir:* S. Gerasimov; *Phot:* V. Rapoport; *Des:* B. Dulenkov, P. Lehmann; *Music:* A. Khachaturyan, P. Chekalov; *Sound:* V. Khlobynin, V. Blass.

*Cast:* N. Eremenko, Zh. Bolotova, T. Makarova, V. Doronin, N. Medvedeva, S. Nikonenko, O. Ivanov, M. Gluzsky, S. Gerasimov.

*Peter the Great* (Part I — Lenfilm), 1937

*Script:* A. Tolstoy (from his novel of the same name), V. Petrov; *Dir:* V. Petrov; *Phot:* V. Gardanov, V. Yakovlev; *Des:* N. Suvorov;

*Music:* V. Shcherbachev; *Sound:* Z. Zalkind.

*Cast:* N. Simonov, N. Cherkasov, A. Tarasova, M. Zharov, M. Tarkhanov, I. Zarubina, K. Gibshman, V. Dobrovolsky, N. Roshefor, F. Bogdanov, N. Litvinov.

(Part II — Lenfilm), 1938

*Script:* A. Tolstoy, N. Leshchenko; *Dir:* V. Petrov; *Phot:* V. Yakovlev; *Des:* N. Suvorov, V. Kalyagin; *Music:* V. Shcherbachev; *Sound:* Z. Zalkind, Yu. Kurzner.

*Cast:* N. Simonov, A. Tarasova, N. Cherkasov, M. Zharov, M. Tarkhanov, V. Dobrovolsky, I. Zarubina, V. Gardin, E. Garrik, V. Ershov.

*Poem About the Sea* (Mosfilm), 1958

*Script:* A. Dovzhenko; *Dir:* Yu. Solntseva; *Phot:* G. Egiazarov; *Des:* A. Borisov, I. Plastinkin, G. Popov; *Sound:* V. Lagutin.

*Cast:* B. Livanov, B. Andreev, M. Tsarev, M. Romanov, Z. Kirienko, I. Kozlovsky, L. Tarabarinov, G. Kovrov, M. Vital, E. Bondarenko, V. Vladimirova, E. Agurov, N. Naum, A. Konchakova, L. Parkhomenko, E. Gurov, K. Marinchenko, V. Vitrishak, V. Tregub.

## R

*The Rainbow* (Kiev Studios), 1943

*Script:* W. Vasilevskaya (from her story of the same name); *Dir:* M. Donskoy; *Phot:* B. Monastyrsky; *Des:* V. Khmelyova; *Music:* L. Shvarts; *Sound:* A. Babi.

*Cast:* N. Uzhvy, N. Alisova, E. Tyapkina, V. Ivasheva, A. Dunaisky, A. Lisyanskaya, G. Klering, V. Chobur, N. Bratersky, Vitya Vinogradov.

*Red Devils* (Cinema Section of Georgian Commissariat of Education), 1923

*Script:* P. Blyakhin, I. Peristiani; *Dir:* I. Peristiani; *Phot:* A. Digmelov; *Des:* F. Push.

*Cast:* A. Davidovsky, P. Esikovsky, S. Zhozeffi, Kador Ben-Salim, V. Sutyryn, G. Lein, N. Nirov, S. Lyuks, Ya. Burinsky, V. Bryansky.

*The Red Snow-Ball Tree* (Mosfilm), 1974

*Script:* V. Shukshin; *Dir:* V. Shukshin; *Phot:* A. Zabolotsky; *Des:* I. Novoderezhkin; *Music:* L. Cherkanov; *Sound:* V. Belyarov.



*Cast:* V. Shukshin, L. Fedoseeva, I. Ryzhov, M. Skvortsova, M. Vinogradova, Zh. Prokhorenko, T. Gavrilova, A. Vanin, O. Bystrova.

*Resurrection* (Part I—Mosfilm), 1960; (Part II—Mosfilm), 1961

*Script:* E. Gabrilovich, with the participation of M. Schweizer (from L. Tolstoy's novel of the same name); *Dir:* M. Schweitzer; *Phot:* E. Savelyeva, S. Poluyanov; *Des:* D. Vinitsky, A. Freidin; *Music:* G. Sviridov; *Sound:* V. Popov, K. Gordon.

*Cast:* T. Semina, E. Matveev, P. Massalsky, V. Kulakov, V. Bokarev, L. Zolotukhin, V. Sez, N. Sergeev, A. Zueva, V. Gusev, K. Rumyanova, V. Lanovaya, V. Livanov, V. Belokurov, M. Sidorkin, A. Konsovsky.

*The Return of Maxim* (Lenfilm), 1937

*Script:* G. Kozintsev, L. Slavin, L. Trauberg; *Dir:* G. Kozintsev, L. Trauberg; *Phot:* A. Moskvina; *Des:* E. Enei; *Music:* D. Shostakovich; *Sound:* I. Volk, G. Khutoryansky.

*Cast:* B. Chirkov, V. Kibardina, A. Kuznetsov, M. Zharov, A. Zrazhevsky, A. Chistyakov, V. Vanin, A. Bondi, V. Merkuriev, Yu. Tolubeev, N. Kryuchkov.

*The Return of Vassily Bortnikov* (Mosfilm), 1952

*Script:* G. Nikolaeva, E. Gabrilovich (from G. Nikolaeva's novel, *Harvest*); *Dir:* V. Pudovkin; *Phot:* S. Urusevsky; *Des:* A. Freidin, B. Chebotarev; *Music:* K. Molchanov; *Sound:* V. Bogdankevich.

*Cast:* S. Lukyanov, N. Medvedeva, N. Timofeev, A. Chumodurov, I. Makarov, A. Ignatiev, V. Sanaev, K. Luchko, G. Stepanova, N. Mordyukova, N. Dobronravov, N. Shamin, A. Petrov, M. Yarotskaya, V. Kolchin.

*Road to Life* (Mezhrabpomfilm), 1931

*Script:* N. Ekk, R. Yanushkevich, A. Stolper; *Dir:* N. Ekk; *Phot:* V. Pronin; *Des:* I. Stepanov, A. Evmenenko; *Music:* Ya. Stollyar; *Sound:* E. Nesterov.

*Cast:* N. Batalov, I. Kyrla, M. Dzhagofarov, V. Vesnovsky, R. Yanushkevich, M. Zharov, M. Gonta, A. Novikov, A. Antropova, I. Kachalov.

*The Russian Question* (Mosfilm), 1947

*Script and Dir:* M. Romm; *Phot:* B. Volchek; *Des:* S. Mandel; *Music:* A. Khachaturyan; *Sound:* V. Leshchev, E. Kashkevich.

*Cast:* V. Aksyonov, E. Kuzmina, M. Astangov, M. Nazvanov, M. Barabanova, B. Tenin.

## S

*Secret Mission* (Mosfilm), 1950

*Script:* K. Isaev, M. Maklyarsky; *Dir:* M. Romm; *Phot:* B. Volchek; *Des:* A. Freidin, P. Kiselev; *Music:* A. Khachaturyan; *Sound:* V. Popov.

*Cast:* N. Komissarov, S. Vecheslov, E. Kuzmina, V. Makarov, A. Gribov, A. Cheban, V. Savelyev, P. Berezov, V. Belokurov, M. Pertsovsky, A. Plevin, M. Vysotsky, P. Gaideburov, V. Gardin, N. Rybnikov, N. Timofeev, A. Khokhlov, L. Fenin, V. Gotovtsev, B. Petker, N. Svobodin, M. Yanshin, N. Svetlovidov, I. Solovyov, A. Antonov, G. Georgiu.

*Shchors* (Kiev Studios), 1939

*Dir:* A. Dovzhenko; *Asst. Dir:* Yu. Solntseva; *Phot:* Yu. Ekelchak; *Des:* M. Umansky; *Music:* D. Kabalevsky; *Sound:* N. Timartsev.

*Cast:* E. Sampilov, I. Skuratov, L. Lyashenko, Yu. Titov, N. Makarenko, P. Krasilich, A. Grechany, and others.

*She Defends Her Homeland* (TsOKS—Alma-Ata), 1943

*Script:* A. Kapler; *Dir:* F. Ermler; *Phot:* F. Rapoport; *Des:* N. Suvorov; *Music:* G. Popov; *Sound:* Z. Zalkind.

*Cast:* V. Maretskaya, N. Bogolyubov, L. Smirnova, P. Aleinikov, A. Violinov, V. Gremin, I. Fyodorova, B. Dmokhovsky, and others.

*Silence* (Two Parts—Mosfilm), 1964

*Script:* Yu. Bondarev, V. Basov (from Bondarev's novel of the same name); *Dir:* V. Basov; *Phot:* P. Lebeshev; *Des:* G. Turylev; *Music:* V. Basner; *Sound:* A. Ryabov.

*Cast:* V. Konyaev, G. Martynyuk, L. Luzhina, N. Velichko, V. Emelyanova.

*Son-in-Law* (Lenfilm), 1955

*Script:* V. Tendryakov (from his story *The Misfit*); *Dir:* M. Schweitzer; *Phot:* V. Fastovich; *Des:* N. Suvorov; *Music:* A. Pashchenko; *Sound:* L. Walter.

*Cast:* N. Rybnikov, N. Mordyukova, N. Sergeev, A. Denisova, E. Maksimova, S. Krylov, L. Malinovskaya, A. Zabulis, L. Kmit,

V. Gulyaev, B. Solovyov, G. Yukhtin, E. Volskaya, L. Bykov, A. Rumyantseva, L. Golubeva.

*Spring in Saken* (Tbilisi Studios), 1950

*Script:* N. Sanishvili; *Dir:* N. Sanishvili; *Phot:* A. Digshenov, D. Kandelaki; *Des:* R. Mirzashvili; *Music:* A. Kereselidze; *Sound:* R. Langinsky.

*Cast:* A. Maganashvili, L. Asatiani, I. Gvinchidze, A. Omladze,

*Spring in Zarechnaya Street* (Odessa Studios), 1956

*Script:* F. Mironer; *Dir:* F. Mironer, M. Khutsiev; *Phot:* R. Vasilovsky, P. Todorovsky; *Des:* V. Zachinaev; *Music:* B. Mokrousov, V. Kurgansky.

*Cast:* N. Ivanova, N. Rybnikov, V. Pugacheva, G. Yukhtin, R. Shorokhova, N. Klyuchnev, M. Gavrilko, Yu. Belov, V. Bryleev, V. Markin, N. Faleev, E. Kovalenko, T. Galukh, Lyusya Maksimova, Sasha Moroz, V. Gulyaev.

*Spring on the Oder* (Mosfilm), 1968

*Script:* N. Figurovsky, L. Saakov; *Dir:* L. Saakov; *Phot:* V. Vladimirov; *Des:* P. Lashkevich; *Music:* E. Kolmanovsky; *Sound:* A. Shargorodsky.

*Cast:* A. Kuznetsov, A. Grachov, L. Chursina, V. Strzhelchik, Yu. Solomin, G. Yudin, G. Zhzhenov.

*Stories About Lenin* (Mosfilm), 1957

*Script:* E. Gabrilovich, N. Erdman, M. Volpin; *Dir:* S. Yutkevich; *Phot:* E. Andrikanis, A. Moskvina, A. Akhmetova, V. Fastovich; *Des:* A. Berger, P. Kiselev; *Sound:* B. Volsky.

*Cast:* M. Shtraukh, M. Pastukhova, A. Lisyanskaya, O. Efremov, A. Kutepov, V. Sanaev, and others.

*A Story About a Real Man* (Mosfilm), 1948

*Script:* M. Smirnov (from B. Polevoy's story of the same name); *Dir:* A. Stolper; *Phot:* M. Magidson; *Des:* I. Shpinel; *Music:* N. Kryukov; *Sound:* V. Leshchev, E. Kashkevich.

*Cast:* P. Kadochnikov, N. Okhlopkov, A. Diky, V. Merkuriev, T. Makarova, L. Tselikovskaya, L. Sverdlin, Ch. Sushkevich, V. Khokhryakov, A. Mikhailov, N. Dobronravov, B. Babochkin, L. Sokolova, B. Gribkov.

*Suvorov* (Mosfilm), 1940

*Script:* G. Grebner, N. Ravich; *Dir:* V. Pudovkin, M. Doller; *Phot:* A. Golovnya, T. Lobova; *Des:* V. Egorov; *Music:* Yu. Shaporin; *Sound:* N. Timartsev.

*Cast:* N. Cherkasov (Sergeev), A. Yachnitsky, M. Astangov, S. Kiligin, V. Aksyonov, A. Khanov, G. Kovrov, A. Antonov.

## T

*The Tale of the Flaming Years* (Mosfilm), 1960

*Script:* A. Dovzhenko; *Dir:* Yu. Solntseva; *Phot:* F. Provorov, A. Temerin; *Des:* A. Borisov; *Music:* G. Popov; *Sound:* I. Urvantsev, Ya. Kharon.

*Cast:* B. Andreev, S. Lukyanov, V. Merkuryev, N. Vingranovsky, S. Zhgun, M. Maiorov, Z. Kirienko, B. Bibikov, V. Akuraters, V. Zeldin, B. Novikov, E. Bondarenko, A. Romanenko, A. Bogdanova, S. Petrov, V. Kapustina, M. Bulgakova.

*Tales of the Siberian Land* (Mosfilm), 1947

*Script:* I. Pyriev, E. Pomeschchikov, N. Rozhkov; *Dir:* I. Pyriev; *Phot:* V. Pavlov; *Des:* A. Berger, B. Chebotarev; *Music:* N. Kryukov; *Sound:* V. Popov.

*Cast:* V. Druzhnikov, M. Ladynina, B. Andreev, V. Vassilieva, S. Kalinin, E. Savitskaya, V. Zeldin, M. Sidorkin, G. Shpigel, V. Zai-chikov.

*The Teacher* (Lenfilm), 1939

*Script and Dir:* S. Gerasimov; *Phot:* V. Yakovlev; *Des:* V. Semyonov; *Music:* V. Pushkov; *Sound:* E. Nesterov.

*Cast:* T. Makarova, B. Chirkov, P. Volkov, V. Pomerantsev, L. Shabalina, V. Telegina, M. Ekaterininsky, M. Sunozov, I. Nazarov, A. Matveeva, S. Onufriev, A. Kulakov, S. Shinkevich, I. Korovatsky, V. Zamyatin.

*There Was a Singing Blackbird* (Gruzia-Film Studios), 1971

*Script:* O. Ioseliani, D. Eristavi, O. Mekrishvili, I. Nusinov, Sh. Kakhidze, S. Lungin; *Dir:* O. Ioseliani; *Phot:* A. Maisuradze; *Des:* D. Eristavi; *Music:* T. Bakridze; *Sound:* T. Napobashvili, M. Nizharadze, O. Gegichkori.

*Cast:* G. Kandelaki, G. Chkheidze, D. Kakhidze, D. Dzhandifi.

*They Were the First* (Gorky Studios), 1956

*Script:* Yu. Printsev, Yu. Egorov; *Dir:* Yu. Egorov; *Phot:* I. Shatrov; *Des:* P. Galadzhhev; *Music:* M. Fradkin; *Sound:* N. Ozornov.

*Cast:* M. Kondratyev, G. Yumatov, L. Aleshnikova, M. Bernes, M. Ulyanov, A. Tolstykh, V. Terekhov, M. Derzhavin, N. Krachkovskaya, V. Brezhnev, S. Golovanov, V. Stepanov, A. Bakhar, G. Slabinyak, A. Grahve.

*The Third Blow* (Kiev Studios), 1948

*Script:* A. Perventsev; *Dir:* I. Savchenko; *Phot:* M. Kirillov; *Des:* M. Umansky; *Sound:* N. Mina, A. Babi.

*Cast:* A. Diky, N. Bogolyubov, Yu. Shumsky, V. Stanitsyn, V. Golovnya, M. Romanov, I. Pereverzev, S. Blinnikov, V. Naumov, M. Bernes, N. Pishvanov, V. Batalov, L. Faiziev, A. Petrovsky, S. Martinson, M. Astangov, P. Arzhanov, A. Tsinman, Yu. Lavrov.

*Thunderstorm* (Lenfilm), 1934

*Script and Dir:* V. Petrov (from the play of the same name by A. Ostrovsky); *Phot:* V. Gardanov; *Des:* N. Susorov; *Music:* V. Scherbachev; *Sound:* I. Dmitriev.

*Cast:* A. Tarasova, I. Chuvelev, V. Massalitinova, I. Zarubina, M. Zharov, M. Tarkhanov, M. Tsarev, E. Korchagina-Aleksandrovskaya.

*To Love Man* (Gorky Studios), 1973

*Script:* S. Gerasimov; *Dir:* S. Gerasimov; *Phot:* V. Rapoport; *Des:* P. Pashkevich, P. Galadzhhev; *Music:* I. Kataev; *Sound:* D. Faingolts.

*Cast:* A. Solonitsyn, L. Virolainen, T. Makarova, Zh. Bolotova, A. Panchenko.

*Tractor-Drivers* (Mosfilm), 1939

*Script:* E. Pomeshchikov; *Dir:* I. Pyriev; *Phot:* A. Galperin; *Des:* V. Kaplunovsky; *Music:* Pokrass Brothers; *Sound:* V. Leshchev.

*Cast:* M. Ladynina, N. Kryuchkov, B. Andreev, S. Kayukov, P. Aleinikov, V. Kolchin, O. Borovikova.

*True Friends* (Mosfilm), 1954

*Script:* K. Isaev; *Dir:* M. Kalatozov; *Phot:* M. Magidson; *Des:* A. Parkhomenko; *Music:* T. Khrennikov; *Sound:* V. Popov.

*Cast:* V. Merkuryev, B. Chirkov, A. Borisov, A. Gribov, L. Gritsenko, L. Shagalova, A. Pokrovsky, L. Genika, Yu. Sarantsev,

A. Duddarov, A. Lebedev, N. Smorchkov, V. Ratomsky, V. Volskaya, G. Georgiu, G. Belov, Yu. Leonidov, V. Kornukov, M. Pugovkin, K. Nassonov, B. Zhavoronkov, V. Durov, V. Butylin, M. Smirnov, G. Gumilevsky.

*The Twenty-Six Baku Commissars* (Mosfilm and Azerbaijanfilm), 1965

*Script:* I. Gusseinov, A. Ibragimov, M. Maksimov; *Dir:* A. Ibragimov; *Phot:* K. Petricheni; *Des:* E. Svidetelev; *Music:* A. Melikov, O. Burkova.

*Cast:* V. Samoilov, M. Dadashev, T. Archvadze, G. Boitsov, S. Sokolovsky, G. Manulyan, V. Vinogradov, I. Yurashas, N. Zhalkin, E. Zeinalov, I. Kosykh, E. Izotov, V. Pitsek, L. Arushanyan, Yu. Martynov, Ch. Aliev, V. Ferapontov, Kh. Nazaretyan, A. Arslanov, V. Murganov, G. Manukyan, S. Dadashev, N. Setkhanyan, V. Vyshkovsky, V. Akopyan.

*Two Soldiers* (Tashkent Studios), 1943

*Script:* E. Gabrilovich (from a story by L. Slavin, *My Countrymen*); *Dir:* L. Lukov; *Phot:* A. Ginzburg; *Des:* V. Kaplunovsky; *Music:* N. Bogoslovsky; *Sound:* A. Shargorodsky.

*Cast:* M. Bernes, B. Andreev, V. Shershneva, Ya. Zheimo, M. Shtraukh, I. Kuznetsov, S. Krylov, L. Masokha.

## V

*Valery Chkalov* (Lenfilm), 1941

*Script:* G. Baidukov, D. Tarasov, B. Chirkov; *Dir:* M. Kalatozov; *Phot:* A. Ginzburg; *Des:* A. Blek; *Music:* V. Pushkov; *Sound:* A. Shargorodsky, E. Nesterov.

*Cast:* M. Gelovani, S. Mezinsky, V. Belokurov, K. Tarasova, V. Vanin, P. Berezov, S. Yarov, B. Zhukovsky, I. Smyslovsky, F. Bogdanov.

*The Village Schoolteacher* (Soyuzdetfilm), 1947

*Script:* M. Smirnova; *Dir:* M. Donskoy; *Phot:* S. Urusevsky; *Des:* D. Vinitzky, P. Pashkevich; *Music:* L. Schwarz; *Sound:* S. Yurtsev.

*Cast:* V. Maretskaya, D. Sagal, P. Olenev, V. Maruta, V. Belokurov, D. Pavlov, Volodya Lepeshinsky, Tolya Grachov, Emma Balashova, Borya Belyaev, Oleg Shmelev, N. Bershadskaya, A. Lissyan-

skaya, A. Lysak, A. Zhukov, A. Konsovsky, N. Malishevsky, B. Runge, R. Plyatt.

*Volga-Volga* (Mosfilm), 1938

*Script*: M. Volpin, N. Erdman, G. Aleksandrov; *Dir*: G. Aleksandrov; *Phot*: B. Petrov; *Des*: I. Grivtsov, M. Karyakin; *Music*: I. Dunaevsky; *Sound*: E. Nesterov.

*Cast*: I. Ilinsky, L. Orlova, P. Olenov, A. Tutyshkin, S. Antimonov, V. Volodin, M. Mironova, N. Kondratyev, A. Dolinin, V. Sanaev, I. Chuvelev, Tolya Shalaev.

*The Vyborg Side* (Lenfilm), 1938

*Script and Dir*: G. Kozintsev, L. Trauberg; *Phot*: A. Moskvina, G. Filatov; *Des*: V. Vlasov; *Music*: D. Shostakovich; *Sound*: I. Volk, B. Khutoryansky.

*Cast*: M. Shtraukh, M. Gelovani, L. Lyubashevsky, B. Chirkov, V. Kibardina, N. Uzhvy, A. Kuznetsov, M. Zharov, A. Chistyakov, Yu. Tolubeev, B. Zhukovsky, D. Dudnikov, I. Nazarov.

*War and Peace* (Part I — *Andrei Bolkonsky*, Mosfilm), 1966

(Part II — *Natasha Rostova*, Mosfilm), 1966

(Part III — *1812*, Mosfilm), 1967

(Part IV — *Pierre Bezukhov*, Mosfilm), 1967

*Script*: S. Bondarchuk, V. Solovyova (from L. Tolstoy's novel of the same name); *Dir*: S. Bondarchuk; *Phot*: A. Petritsky; *Des*: M. Bogdanov, G. Myasnikov; *Music*: V. Ovchinnikov; *Sound*: Yu. Mikhailov, I. Urvantsev.

*Cast*: L. Savelyeva, S. Bondarchuk, V. Tikhonov, V. Stanitsyn, K. Golovko, O. Tabakov, N. Kodin, S. Ermilov, I. Gubanov, A. Ktorov, A. Shuranova, A. Vertinskaya, B. Smirnov, I. Skobtseva, V. Lanovoy, O. Efremov, N. Tolkachev, A. Borisov, N. Mordyukova, E. Tyapkina, K. Polovikova, E. Martsevich, A. Stepanova, D. Firsova, G. Kravchenko, B. Zakhava, N. Trofimov.

*We Are From Kronstadt* (Mosfilm), 1936

*Script*: V. Vishnevsky; *Dir*: E. Dzigan; *Phot*: N. Naumov-Strazh; *Des*: V. Egorov; *Sound*: P. Pavlov.

*Cast*: V. Zaichikov, G. Bushuev, N. Ivakin, O. Zhakov, R. Esipova, P. Kirillov, E. Gunn, M. Gurinenko, F. Seleznev, P. Sobolevsky.

*We'll Get By Till Monday* (Gorky Studios), 1968

*Script:* G. Polonsky; *Dir:* S. Rostotsky; *Phot:* V. Shumsky;  
*Music:* K. Molchanov; *Lyrics:* N. Zabolotsky; *Sound:* A. Izbutsky.  
*Cast:* V. Tikhonov, I. Pechernikova, N. Menshikova, M. Zimin,  
O. Zhizneva, I. Arkharova, V. Zubarev, O. Ostroumova, I. Starygin,  
R. Grigoryeva, Yu. Chernov.

*White Bird with Black Markings* (Dovzhenko Studios), 1971

*Script:* Yu. Ilyenko, I. Mikolaichuk; *Dir:* Yu. Ilyenko; *Des:*  
A. Mamontov; *Sound:* L. Vachi.

*Cast:* L. Kadochnikova, I. Mikolaichuk, N. Naum, D. Firsova,  
A. Plotnikov, V. Simchich, M. Ilyenko, V. Shakalo, O. Panstvin.

*White Sun of the Desert* (Mosfilm), 1969

*Script:* V. Ezhov, R. Ibragimbekov; *Dir:* V. Motyl; *Phot:* E. Rozovsky; *Des:* V. Kostin, B. Minevich; *Music:* I. Schwarz; *Sound:*  
M. Lazarev, G. Salyev.

*Cast:* A. Kuznetsov, P. Luspekaev, S. Mishulin, K. Kavsadze,  
R. Kurkina, N. Godovikov, T. Fedotova, M. Dudaev, N. Badyev,  
V. Kadochnikov.

## Y

*The Young Guard* (Two Parts—Gorky Studios), 1948

*Script and Dir:* S. Gerasimov (from A. Fadeev's novel of the same name); *Phot:* V. Rapoport; *Des:* I. Stepanov; *Music:* D. Shostakovich; *Sound:* N. Pisarev.

*Cast:* T. Makarova, V. Khokhryakov, E. Anufrieva, M. Yarot-skaya, L. Fenin, L. Semyonova, A. Kalashnikova, E. Grishko, A. Panoval, A. Denisova, V. Uralsky, E. Vorkul, A. Kharitonova, S. Komarov, A. Antonov, G. Shpigel, V. Bokarev, A. Fait, E. Teterin, A. Vysokovsky, I. Gaidamaka, O. Smirnov, B. Magalif, A. Rozanov, A. Karasev, V. Ivanov, I. Makarova, S. Gurzo, B. Bityukov, N. Mor-dyukova, S. Bondarchuk, G. Romanov, L. Shagalova.

## Z

*Zvenigora* (VUFKU—Odessa), 1928

*Script:* M. Ioganson, Yu. Tyutyunik; *Dir:* A. Dovzhenko; *Phot:*  
B. Zavelev; *Des:* V. Krichevsky.

*Cast:* N. Nademsky, S. Svashenko, L. Podorozhny, G. Astafyev,  
A. Barbe.



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